BIBLIOTEKA
Instytutu
Bałtyckiego
w Bydgoszczy

DER OF A NATION

GERMAN DESTRUCTION OF POLISH CULTURE

MURDER OF A NATION

German Destruction of Polish Culture

873888

By

G. M. GODDEN

Foreword by

SIR DAVID ROSS, K.B.E., D.Lit.,

Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford

LONDON : BURNS OATES

1943

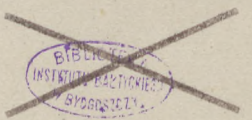
Nie pożycza się do domu

First published 1943

412044

To the memory of seventeen Professors of the ancient University of Cracow, killed by inhuman treatment in the Nazi Concentration Camp of Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg, near Berlin, 1939-1940

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis



Biblioteka Główna
UNIWERSYTETU GDAŃSKIEGO
1100611457

D/58
S
30.III.46

THIS BOOK IS PRODUCED IN COMPLETE CONFORMITY
WITH THE AUTHORIZED ECONOMY STANDARDS

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
FOR BURNS OATES & WASHBOURNE LTD.
BY THE CHAPEL RIVER PRESS, ANDOVER, HANTS.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
FOREWORD	by Sir David Ross, K.B.E., D.Lit., Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford	iv
PREFACE		v
I	German Declaration of War upon Polish Culture	1
II	Destruction of Polish Education	7
III	Organised Destruction of Polish Science and Literature	22
IV	Destruction of Polish Art	37
V	Destruction of Polish Historical Records and Buildings, State Archives and Relics	51
VI	But Poland Lives	57

FOREWORD

By Sir David Ross, K.B.E., D.Lit., Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford

It is well that the world should know the manner in which the "civilising" mission of Germany has been carried out in countries which the German forces have occupied since 1939. Since all true Kultur should bear the German stamp, it follows that "inferior" cultures should be as far as possible exterminated; and readers of these pages will be able to see how thoroughly and consistently this has been done in Poland—language, education, literature and science, the press and the wireless, art, historical records and buildings—everything that the Polish nation holds dear has been effaced with a heavy and ruthless hand. Never in history, one may venture to say, has so deliberate an attempt been made to kill the soul of a people.

In spite of difficulties, much news of these events has found its way to Poles who are in exile from their mother country; and the record has been set down, with careful documentation, by the author of this book. Much of it is enough to sicken the heart of any reader: let him glance, for instance, at the treatment meted out to the Professors of Cracow University. Such deliberate barbarity savours of madness. *Deus quos vult perdere, dementat prius.*

David Ross.

PREFACE

THE attempted destruction of the Polish nation is one of the greatest offences against the laws of God and of man in the criminal record of Germany. That attempt involves the effort to destroy the mind of Poland, the Polish culture perfected in lands inhabited by Poles for a thousand years. The following pages give only an indication of the extent and richness of this culture ; and, in greater detail, some record of the inhuman fury of destruction with which the new barbarians of our age have sought to wipe out ten centuries of achievement. That fury has recoiled from a resistance so determined, so skilful, so reckless in courage, that the shooting and hanging, often after torture, of a quarter million Polish men and women, in the three years of the German occupation of Poland, have only served to weld the Polish nation into a unity that is indestructible. The people in Poland, to-day, are deprived of all external State aid ; they have only themselves to rely on ; but Poland is alive, in every town and village, with the sense of national community inspired by the faith that "*Poland lives, Poland will conquer.*"

"Poland," said Napoleon, "is the keystone in the arch of Europe." That arch is already being rebuilt, by men and women working in Poland under the continual threat, too often, alas, carried out, of imprisonment, torture and death. Little, of course, can be published, as yet, concerning the successes of the Polish front in Poland ; but it may be stated that active resistance is increasing with the increase of the German terror, unleashed in the spring of 1942 ; and that this increase has been so effective that the German authorities in Poland have been forced to distribute firearms to German officials, both men and women. Some account of the incredible achievements of the underground Polish Press will be found in the

concluding chapter of this book. To-day the would-be murderers of Poland perceive that they are standing on ground which, at any moment, may open beneath their feet, to engulf them irrevocably in the death and destruction which they have inflicted on an unarmed and seemingly helpless people. The German terror may yet be increased ; but the seething all-consuming underground fire that burns in Poland will never be put out.

The wanton destruction of the historic treasures of Polish cities, and of priceless libraries and scientific collections, the elimination of all creative cultural work, the brutal killing of Polish scientists, historians, men of letters and artists, often after savage maltreatment, are facts that have horrified the civilised world. These, and kindred " black deeds of shame " should, as Cardinal Hinsley has told us, be known :

" To condone them, to excuse them, to pass them over in silence would make a futile mockery of the prayer ' Deliver us from blood-guiltiness O Lord.' "*

The liberating armies of Poland are forming on land, on the sea, in the air ; but the army of the Polish people, not least among them her students, writers, scholars, scientists, teachers, artists, are working with no less indomitable courage and devotion, in keeping alive the flame of Polish national culture in spite of the iron tyranny of the Nazi regime, and the bitter conditions of exile. For three years the world has watched their heroic struggle with wonder and admiration. When the day of liberation comes surely all the nations who have escaped the Nazi scourge will unite to give back to Poland the means of developing a national culture, the spirit of which no Teutonic fury has been able to destroy.

G. M. GODDEN.

October 9th, 1942.

* Broadcast by His Eminence Cardinal Hinsley, 8.7.42.

Chapter I

German Declaration of War upon Polish Culture

Destruction of the Polish Language

" We must see that all traces of Polish thought and culture are wiped out." Gauleiter Forster, Frankfurter Zeitung, *28.2.1942.*

German rule in Poland aims, admittedly, at the complete destruction of the Polish people, soul, mind, and body. " We do not admit the right of Poles to life in any form," is an official statement published in the *Ostdeutscher Beobachter.* Herr Greiser, Gauleiter of Poznania, has been no less explicit. In a speech at Gniezno, on November 6, 1940, Gauleiter Greiser said " There will never be an independent Polish State again. . . . Poles can only work among us as labourers." In an address to the youth of Poland he affirmed that an *Ausrottungskampf*, a war of extermination, had been proclaimed against the Polish intelligentsia ; and in a speech made in the presence of the Reich Minister of Education, Herr Rust, on November 22, 1940, Herr Greiser declared that " We must hate the Poles like poison." A report on a Congress of Nazi Party Leaders sums up the attitude of the Nazi rulers to the Poles in one descriptive phrase " *diese Untermenschen* " —these " sub-humans."*

A race considered to be " sub-human " can obviously be supposed to do without religion, culture, or any other of the fundamental rights of human beings. Both religion and culture are being systematically and openly destroyed in Poland, not only as unnecessary for " sub-humans," but also as producing an undesired freedom and dignity of spirit and of mind. The German attack on the religious faith and practice of the Poles, both on the Catholic majority and on the Lutheran minority, has been recorded with complete documentation.† The attack on the mind of the nation is less well known. It is a record of such savage and ruthless barbarism as has not been experienced

* *Ostdeutscher Beobachter.*

† *The German New Order in Poland,* September, 1939–June, 1941, Polish Ministry of Information. *The Persecution of the Catholic Church in German-occupied Poland, Official Reports,* Burns and Oates. *Poland,* G. M. Godden, Burns and Oates.

in Europe for thirteen centuries. The cultural destruction wrought by Goths, Vandals, Huns, Ostrogoths and Lombards, in the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries, has been revived by the German Power in our own day. This is a phenomenon well worth study from the historical point of view. It is also of immediate interest to the people of Great Britain, who still remain the principal object of German domination. The German leaders intend that we should suffer all that Poland has suffered. Therefore it is well that we should know exactly, and in detail, what that intention means. In the following pages will be found records, of which the accuracy has been investigated with scrupulous care, of the German war upon the thousand-year-old culture of Poland.

It is very necessary to remember that the attempt to destroy Polish schools and Universities, literary and scientific Societies, training colleges, libraries and archives, in a word the culture of Poland, is the putting into practice of a deliberate policy. Berlin has conceived the diabolical design of reducing the people of Poland to illiteracy. The Polish nation is to be made into a community of manual workers, deprived of all national tradition and of their own language, and existing only to form a reservoir of labour for the benefit of the German Reich. The Governor-General of Central Poland, Frank, has declared, quite openly :

" The Poles do not need Universities, or Secondary Schools ; the Polish lands are to be changed into an intellectual desert : *eine intellektuelle Wueste.*"

This reservoir of labour, moreover, is not to be free labour. The apostle of the fundamental Nazi policy of *Blut und Boden*, " Blood and Soil," Reich-Minister Walter Darré, pointed out, in a speech made just before the invasion of Belgium and Holland, that when the Nazi official statements mention " slave labour " this is what they mean :—

" Please do not interpret the word ' slave ' as a rhetorical term. We actually have in mind a modern form of mediæval slavery which we can and must introduce."*

Again, this new source of man-power for Germany is to be not only illiterate but debased. The German aim is to

* *Times*, 25.5.42.

make it impossible for Polish youth to develop mental abilities, powers of independent thought, or initiative ; and only too possible to acquire a taste for pornographic literature, ample supplies of which have been introduced into Poland, and extensively circulated.

Attack on the Polish Language

Let us look, first, at the methods adopted for the complete extermination of the Polish language. It is, of course, a Slavonic language. It is a vigorous language ; and it has preserved some of the special characteristics of Palaeo-Slavonic, such as the nasal a and e. The poet Casimir Brodzinski has commemorated the harmony, the melody, and the strength of the Polish language, and compares it with the " murmur of the oak." This is how the insensate vandals of the twentieth century have gone to work.

Public use of the Polish Language Prohibited

First, in Western Poland, came the almost complete banning of the Polish language from public life. All Polish inscriptions were removed from State and municipal institutions, and from schools and offices ; from signboards of shops ; and even from private houses. A German appearance was thus imposed on every town and village of Western Poland. The official Nazi organs, such as the *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* and the *Litzmannstädter Zeitung*, announced that the penalty for using even the smallest Polish inscription would be imprisonment. This is, of course, an entirely arbitrary penalty, outside any acknowledged legal code. It is also a penalty which frequently amounts to a death sentence, owing to the tortures employed by the German authorities, and to the foul and inhuman conditions of Nazi prisons.

Inscriptions which could not be removed, such as those carved on churches, were ordered to be painted out, or whitewashed. Even the Polish inscriptions on tombstones in cemeteries fell under the ban ; and an order went out that tombstones from which these inscriptions had not been removed by a certain date should be confiscated.* In the Gdynia district, and on the Baltic Coast, members of the

* *Deutsche Rundschau*, 15.1.40.

Nazi police, the Gestapo, and of the "S.S." or Black Guards known as the spearhead of Hitlerism, themselves broke up the tombstones. The names of all towns and villages are completely or partially altered into German, the name being in some cases entirely changed. All central squares and arterial roads have been named after Adolf Hitler; other streets will be found inscribed "Bismarck" or "Goering." A special insult was invented for the Poles of Pomerania. All the communes of this area were instructed to submit, themselves, suggestions for the changing of their Polish names to German ones; suggestions were to be examined by a special Committee in Danzig, and the names finally selected were then to be submitted to the Reich Minister of the Interior for his approval. Early in 1941 it was reported that all businesses, offices and shops in Western Poland had received the order to put up notices "Only German spoken." The experience of the centre of the Polish textile industry, Lodz, under the notorious Gauleiter Herr Greiser, crystallizes the Nazi attitude to a conquered race. By December, 1939, a short three months after the first German soldier had set foot on Polish soil, all external marks of the Polish character of the city of Lodz were being rapidly removed. All street names had already been changed into German; the sale of Polish newspapers was prohibited; all national monuments, including the monument to Kosciuszko, had been destroyed; and in all the Polish schools in Lodz German had been introduced as the language of instruction. The name of the city has been changed to Litzmannstadt, and the speaking of Polish in public has been forbidden. One consolation was reserved for the Polish population of Lodz. It was discovered that German inscriptions on the notice boards were full of striking grammatical errors, a fact which caused the German organ *Litzmannstädter Zeitung* great indignation. Certainly the desired effect of a truly German city was not achieved. It must be remembered that the attempt to silence the Polish language in Western Poland is an attempt to silence a language which is spoken by ninety out of a hundred of the inhabitants.

"No difference," wrote *The Times*,* "is made between the provinces annexed to the Reich and the rest of the

* *Times*, 1.3.40.

occupied territory. Everything is being destroyed which might contribute to the culture of the Polish people. . . . Germany aims at a complete annihilation of Polish intellectual life." The relentless attack on the Polish language has been waged as fiercely in Central Poland as in the Western Provinces although these are nominally more closely united to the Third Reich. A particular humiliation was inflicted on the Poles of the Central Provinces. The first anniversary of the German invasion was chosen as the date for the changing into German the names of all the principal squares in the town. In Central Poland street names are changed into German; and German notices appear on the public buildings, in the trams, and on the shops.

The *Krakauer Zeitung* reported in its issue of November 5 last (1941) that in future all German departments, offices, and other official and unofficial organisations and groups are to use only German names for the towns of Central Poland. Thus Piotrkow becomes Petrikau, Rzeszow becomes Reichshof, and so on.

Even the historic city of Cracow, the capital of Poland from the beginning of the fourteenth century until the seventeenth century, the burial place of her kings from the year 1333, the seat of a University founded in 1364, the scene of the Diet of 1347 at which was laid the foundation of Polish jurisprudence, even this city saturated with Polish history for over five hundred years, has suffered the destructive rage and folly of Nazism. The old Market Place in Cracow is re-named the "Adolf Hitler-Platz"; Sobieski Street, named after the Polish warrior king who saved Europe from the Turkish invasion in 1683, becomes the "Polizeistrasse." The Nazi authorities have stated that, in the choice of new names, they will be "governed by historical and cultural regards." Is it an historical or a cultural impulse that has replaced the name of Sobieski with a commemoration of the Nazi police? Or is it just the German obsession with the value of their own Gestapo?

Private use of the Polish language prohibited

The Polish language has been banned from all public use in Western Poland. It is forbidden to speak it in offices, in the Courts, in schools and colleges, in public institutions,

in the theatres. But the complete annihilation of a language cannot, of course, be achieved if it is permitted to speak it in private conversation. And yet to forbid an ancient and proud nation, with a population of over 33,000,000, to talk to one another in their mother tongue would appear to be the dream of a madman. Nevertheless, German megalomania has endeavoured to enforce this monstrous invasion of personal liberty. In many localities in Poland it is actually forbidden to use the Polish language in private. To talk Polish in a restaurant is to provoke the fury of the German *Herrenvolk* who may be present, and this whether they are in uniform or not. The offence of speaking Polish has often resulted in the "culprit" being taken off to the Nazi police station and there beaten with rubber truncheons. There have been many cases of the brutal beating of the gallant Polish children because they were speaking to each other in their native tongue. An Englishwoman, long resident in Bydgoszcz (Bromberg) as a schoolmistress, has given a vivid account on her return to England, through the intervention of the American Embassy, in March, 1940, of what happened to Polish women and children in that city if they ventured to speak Polish :—"Poles are now forbidden to speak their own language in Bydgoszcz. . . . I myself saw a Polish lady having her ears boxed by a German in a tram for speaking Polish in a whisper, and I have direct personal knowledge of another case in which a small girl was struck in the face and her young brother beaten unmercifully for the same reason. *Volksdeutsch* Germans go about the streets with dog-whips, and strike across the face anyone whom they hear talking Polish."* Anyone who dared to speak Polish in queues outside foodshops was immediately pushed to the end of the queue, and frequently could not purchase any food at all. Neither may Poles read in their own language ; Polish books, periodicals, newspapers, all are suppressed.

Use of the Polish Language Prohibited in Religious Observances

In the Western Provinces of Poland the religious life of the Polish people is attacked by the order forbidding the

* *Times*, 6.3.40.

hearing of confessions in Polish—for this "crime" many priests have been denounced*—confessions must be heard in German; by the forbidding of singing of ecclesiastical chants in Polish; and by the forbidding of preaching in Polish. Two years ago *The Times* published, in a leading article, a noble protest against the "monstrous crimes against humanity" carried on under the Nazi regime in Poland, declaring that "so long as the worth of the spiritual life is cherished by mankind the Nazi methods of subjection will be held in abhorrence, and the courage of the Poles in this period of deep affliction will be honoured and sustained."† The Nazi regime strikes, through the prohibition of the Polish language, at the soul and at the mind of Poland. What more monstrous crime against a nation can be conceived than that of forbidding a people to worship God in their own language?

CHAPTER II

DESTRUCTION OF POLISH EDUCATION

Poland to be a State of Uneducated Slaves

THE creators and administrators of the Nazi regime have been aptly called "active enemies of civilisation."‡ Never have they shown themselves more systematic, more active, more inhuman than in their assault on Polish education. It is very necessary to remember that this assault is the deliberate policy of the German rulers, and no mere sporadic outburst of savagery. The fate of Poland, as decreed by the "Third Reich," is to become a nation of manual and technical workers labouring for the benefit of Germany—the *knechts*, servants, of the superior German

* *Tablet*, 8.3.41.

† *Europe under the Nazi Scourge*. Reprints from *The Times*, p. 57, "Destroying a Nation."

‡ *Protest of the Universities of England and Wales on the inhuman treatment of the Professors of Cracow University, December*, 1939.

race ; and therefore the Poles would need only such elementary education as manual and technical workers require. The declaration of the Nazi administrative head of the Lodz district is typical :—" *Wir sind ein Herrenvolk* "—we are masters, and the Pole is a servant—*Knecht.**

Ten Centuries of Polish Education

To justify this policy the monstrous claim has been put forward that Poland " never had any educated classes but merely 'a degenerate and demoralised pseudo-intelligentsia' "† The truth, of course, is that the Polish Universities, and schools, the learning and research of Polish scholars, are the efflorescence of a growth of ten centuries. Benedictine schools were flourishing in Poland during the reign of King Boleslas I, that " lion-hearted " king who, from his accession in A.D. 992, showed himself eager to spread Christian civilisation among his people. Cardinal Newman has told us what Benedictine culture meant for Northern Europe, slowly to be fashioned into the new Christendom of the West :—" Silent men were observed about the country, or discovered in the forest, digging, clearing, and building. . . by degrees the woody swamp became a hermitage, a religious house, a farm, an abbey, a village, a seminary, a school of learning, and a city."‡ A new impetus to the Polish schools of learning came in the early thirteenth century with the coming of the Franciscan friars ; and in the fourteenth century (1364) King Casimir, surnamed the Great, founded the University of Cracow. The original foundation included the faculties of law, of philosophy, and of medicine. The faculty of theology was added in the fifteenth century. Students from France, Germany, Hungary and Italy sought learning in Cracow ; and, towards the end of the fifteenth century the Cracow undergraduate gown was worn by the immortal astronomer Nicholas Copernicus. In the seventeenth century Polish culture, informed by Catholic learning, had gained a " truly amazing predominance " in Eastern Russia and the Ukraine.§ In the

* *Free Europe*, 15.12.39 ; *Times*, 9.12.40.
† *Times*, 25.10.40, *quoting a German statement*.
‡ *Mission of St. Benedict*, Cardinal Newman, s 9.
§ *Poland*, Roman Dyboski, p. 33.

tragic eighteenth century which was to witness the first dismemberment of Poland, both historic and scientific research had begun to flourish ; and the first State Department of Education to be created in Europe was set up (1773). The capital of Warsaw became a centre of creative effort. Poland, divided and enslaved—plundered by stronger Powers, as W. E. Lecky said, " with no more regard for honour or honesty, or the mere decency of appearances, than is shown by a burglar or a footpad "*—was still alive in spirit and in mind.

Education in the New Poland

Directly the days of her bondage were over, the unconquerable vitality of Poland, immortalised in the cry of the Polish legions " Poland hath not perished," blazed out. A free Poland, full of constructive energy, rose from the devastation of the World War of 1914–18. Here is a short summary of what Poland achieved in the field of education in her brief years of peace and freedom, from 1921 to 1939. Only by keeping in mind that achievement is it possible to measure with any degree of accuracy the enormity of the crime that has been wrought by the German destructionists.

Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Schools

Education in Poland, as decreed in the Polish Constitution was universal and free ; and began with the Kindergarten, which had been started in Warsaw as early as 1840. The Montessori and Decroly methods were in use ; and games and open-air teaching promoted the health of young Poland from four to seven years of age. From the ages of seven to fourteen the children were to pass through the elementary schools. The secondary school stage followed, the last two years of which would be devoted to special preparation for university study in " arts " or sciences. By the year 1929–30 war-ravaged Poland could claim 26,539 elementary schools. Special schools were opened for the mentally undeveloped, the deaf and dumb and the blind children.

The subjects taught in the Polish elementary schools were religion, the mother tongue, history, geography,

* *History of England*, W. E. Lecky, V., p. 217.

arithmetic with geometry, the elements of natural science, drawing and singing; and great stress was laid on instruction in civics. Physical culture was fully provided for; and instruction in handicrafts and house-keeping. Libraries for the children existed in almost every school. School workshops, chemical and biological laboratories, and school kitchens were set up. Meals were provided during school hours, by co-operation with Parents' Committees. Teachers' Training Colleges were created, and in 1933 numbered 200 with over 30,000 students.

The secondary schools of the new Poland were crowded with boys and girls from the ranks of the peasantry and the town proletariat. In 1929–30 Poland possessed 759 secondary schools, giving a liberal education. The vocational schools, for technical and commercial education, received special care, and were declared to be one of the chief aims of the Polish School-Reform Bill of 1932. A very wide extension of vocational training was achieved. These schools comprised technical schools for training artisans, and agricultural and horticultural workers; commercial schools; vocational schools for women; and continuation schools for young students already at work in industrial or commercial jobs.

Polish Universities

Polish university life dates back, as we have seen, to the foundation of the University of Cracow in the fourteenth century. The University of Lwow was founded in 1661; both in Lwow and in Wilno the Jesuit schools had already been inaugurated. The Universities of Warsaw and of Wilno gained eminence in the nineteenth century. When freedom came to Poland, after the war of 1914, new universities were set up; and the old universities soon had more than twice their pre-war number of students. The Univesity of Poznan was founded in 1919. Recently there have been added to its buildings a large chemistry building, and a splendidly equipped anatomy building. In the academic year 1938–9 five thousand students were in attendance. In 1933 Poland possessed eleven universities and institutions recognised as of university rank, *viz.* the Universities of Cracow, Warsaw (with 10,000 students in 1939), Lublin,

A WING of the University of Wilno, founded in 1578 by King Stefan Batory. The great Polish preacher, Piotr Skarga, was its first rector. At the beginning of the XIXth century Adam Mickiewicz, the national poet, was an undergraduate of Wilno University. Now the University is closed down, like all the institutions of learning in Poland.

NEW university building in Lwow. The university was founded by King Jan Kazimierz in 1661. Two other colleges at Lwow, the Technical Academy and the Academy of Commerce, were widely known before the present war. Soon after entering Lwow, the Germans arrested and executed the ex-rector of the Technical Academy, an eminent professor and statesman, Kazimierz Bartel.

Lwow, Wilno and Poznan ; and " Academies " which included Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine, Mining and the Fine Arts. The Academies of Engineering included Architecture, Chemistry and Electricity.

Polish Research Work

In the domain of scientific research Poland has always, even in the disastrous days of her dismemberment, carried out research work of all kinds. Physics, chemistry, archæology, historical and legal research, natural science, were all pursued both in Poland, and also by the Polish emigres in Paris. It is only necessary to mention that great Polish scientist Madame Curie *née* Sklodowska to realise the position of Poland in the scientific work of France. The new life of liberated Poland created the Institute of Chemical Research, the State Mineralogical and Geological Institute, a State Meteorological Office, an Institute of Aerodynamics, a Radium Institute, a Biological Institute and a Hydrobiological Research Station. A Sociological School was established at Poznan ; Cracow and Lwow produced distinguished ethnologists ; Cracow had its School of Art Studies, and a notable Linguistic School. The Polish Academy at Cracow had thirty special " Commissions " for different branches of research.

Polish Physical Culture

Physical culture has been recognised as an essential element in the education of the new Poland. Physical exercises were compulsory both in the elementary and secondary schools. All new schools that were being built in Poland included plans for gymnasia. Four universities in Poland possessed fully developed facilities for the training of physical instructors. The Institute of Physical Education, at Bielany near Warsaw, had one of the best buildings of its kind in Europe. The Polish Ministry of Education included a " Physical Culture Section." The development of playgrounds, stadiums, summer camps, hurdle race courses, swimming pools, tennis courts and the like has been phenomenal and it is not surprising that Poland stood eighth on the final list in the results of the Olympic Games in 1932.

Polish Adult Education

Finally, the new Poland did not forget adult education. During the century of her partitioning and captivity, when the school education of her people was deliberately neglected, or turned by the occupying Powers into an instrument for the destruction of her nationality, Poland had organised vigorous centres of adult education. There were the People's School Society, the University Extension Courses, the work of the Macierz Szkolna, and heroic efforts by secret societies. When a free Poland began her great work of national reconstruction the importance of adult education was immediately recognised. A special Department of Adult Education was created in the new Polish Ministry of Public Instruction ; educational courses for adults, generally of four years duration, were set up in most of Poland's larger cities ; and "winter schools" were organised for country districts. "Village Universities," created on the Danish model, were actively supported by circles of village youth. Adult education has also been assisted by the Polish Radio Company. An entire academic department was set up, in the Free University of Warsaw, for the training of teachers for adult education. At a World Conference on Adult Education, held at Cambridge in 1929, Poland was represented by delegates from widely different Polish educational bodies occupied with this branch of teaching.

German destruction of Polish Education

For ten centuries Poland has had her schools, her Universities, her organisations for training mind and body, her distinguished scientists. It is this carefully built up and rebuilt national edifice, so complete from the kindergarten of the child to the laboratories and libraries of professors and research students, that Nazi barbarism has sought utterly to destroy. This destruction, moreover, had nothing to do with the ravages incidental to war, and especially to totalitarian war. It is a destruction deliberately aimed at the roots of Polish national life and learning ; and ruthlessly carried out. Schools and universities are closed. Polish youth is prevented from having access to any Polish educational institution. School children are maltreated and in some cases shot.

Teachers are turned adrift, homeless and penniless. Professors are taken away to concentration camps, where not infrequently, they have died, killed by torture and incredible ill usage ; the brutal crimes committed by the Nazi regime on these helpless victims cry out for retribution.

The German administration has endeavoured to build a wall of silence round Poland, justly dreading the effect on world opinion when the facts of that administration become known. " Shades have been drawn tight at every window looking into Poland," as the *New York Times* declared, " to hide an ugly spectacle."* Every application made, either by the *New York Times* or the U.S.A. Press Association, for admittance to German-occupied Poland had been refused. But no wall of silence, no tightly drawn blinds could hide what was happening in Poland in the autumn of 1939 and the subsequent months. News leaked through in December, 1939, that the German Gestapo, had taken many hostages among the Professors and undergraduates of that centre of Polish culture and science, the University of Poznan. More than 15,000 persons had been executed, either in mass executions or individually, in the Province of Poznan ; the condemned were refused permission to take leave of their families, or to receive the visit of a priest. " It is a deliberate attempt," wrote *The Times*, " to destroy the Poles, both bodily and mentally."†

Arrest, Torture and Death of the Professors of Cracow University

In November, 1939, Europe, and indeed the civilised world, were horrified to learn that in a single day, all the Professors of the University of Cracow had been thrown into prison, to be deported later to concentration camps. This monstrous crime was carried out with typical Nazi brutality. All the members of the University teaching staff were asked to attend a lecture on " The Attitude of National Socialism towards Science," on November 6, 1939. After an insulting address by Dr. Meyer, Chief of the Gestapo in Cracow, all the professors who were present were seized by the Gestapo police, who had

* *New York Times*, 29.1.40.

† *Times*, 14.12.39.

surrounded the Lecture Hall, were ordered to form files of three, and were severely manhandled as they were forced into heavy lorries, already drawn up in front of the university. Five of the professors, the aged Professor Kostanecki, formerly president of the Polish Academy of Science, Professor F. Zoll, a distinguished jurist, Professor W. Konopczynski, the leading Polish historian, Professor T. Lehr-Splawinski, the well-known philologist, and Professor A. Krzyzanowski were treated with special brutality. Many of the professors were septuagenarians, and in bad health. The total number arrested was 180. They were taken first to the military prison and put into narrow, overcrowded cells without even a straw mattress. A chunk of bread was their only food, given late that evening. They were sent on to Breslau prison, and thence to the infamous concentration camp of Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg, near Berlin, in which 12,000 persons were confined. On arrival they were kept waiting, without cover, in icy November rain, in the light of arc-lamps nicknamed "The Sun of Sachsenhausen." During the interval they were insulted, jeered at, and hit by the Nazi guards. The pain of blows delivered near the heart lasted several days. After passing through the camp office, the professors were ordered to undress, and had their heads and beards shaved; they were then ordered into prison uniform, completed with a worn-out soldiers' tunic and an old forage cap. The prisoners' day began always at 5.30 in the morning, with a cold shower; wet towels froze. There were three roll calls daily; fellow prisoners brought those too weak or ill to walk and put them on the floor. On January 16, with a frost of 62 degrees F. the prisoners were kept on parade for two hours; some were frozen to death. The same day 60 internees died, and their bodies were brought out in wheelbarrows. The guards sometimes made prisoners roll over and over in the snow. No drugs or medicines were available in the camp "hospital," except iodine. Professor Casimir Kostanecki, a famous anatomist, and President of the Polish Academy of Science, was too ill to go to the roll call at Xmas Eve; his colleagues had to carry him out and then he had to lie in the snow, dying and in agony. Few that entered the camp hospital left

it alive. The bodies of those who died were invariably brought out on wheelbarrows. Christians were ridiculed in the most gross way. At the sight of a crucifix or medal of the Virgin Mary the warders burst into laughter and made coarse jokes. One day one of the guards snatched at a professor's crucifix, and ordered him to kiss it, which he did and for so doing he was slapped across the face. This was repeated several times. Finally the guard tore the crucifix from the neck of the professor, broke it, and flung it upon the ground. The professors were spared none of the tortures applied in Nazi concentration camps for the purpose of breaking both the spirit and body. They were housed in barracks open to the bitter cold. Several times a day they would be given a shower-bath and then were taken out in the freezing weather, in their underwear, and forced to stand at attention for half an hour. Those professors who were priests or Jews were segregated from the rest and imprisoned with criminals. All, without exception, were regularly beaten. Seventeen of the professors have died under this treatment. Others became nervous wrecks. But not one of them broke down during the long months of their sufferings in the camp. Those who were physically stronger supported the weaker. Not a Quisling was to be found among them.*

Protests and expressions of sympathy from the universities of England and Wales poured into the Polish Embassy in London ; and were well summed up in the resolution sent by the Senate of the University of Leeds, in which it was declared that " this brutal outrage is one committed . . . against the whole community of science and learning throughout the world." One of the seventeen victims, Professor Estreicher, a leading authority on English and French law, had been approached by the Nazi Government to become President of a Polish " Protectorate." Professor Estreicher flatly declined, although aware that prison threatened him if he refused. As *The Times* so well said : " The Germans did not consider either the scientific merits of the famous professor or his age of seventy-one. The Gestapo simply tortured him to death."† The year 1940 brought further news of

* *Times*, 3.12.39 ; 22.12.39.

† *Times*, 30.1.40.

the sufferings of the Cracow professors at Oranienburg. They were still in prison dress ; still had their hair shaved off ; and were being forced to perform hard manual labour. The majority of the tortured professors were then in a state of utter physical exhaustion.

The wave of indignation throughout the civilised world resulted in the release of 103 of the professors of Cracow University, in February, 1940. When they arrived at Cracow a crowd welcomed them at the station with deep emotion. As one of the professors was passing through the street a Polish peasant woman fell upon her knees in front of him, and kissed his hands.

In May, 1940, there were still 60 of the Cracow professors in the camp, " who are all maltreated daily." Eight professors and one student are, as far as is known, still suffering the horrors of the Oranienburg Camp. Thirty professors and lecturers have been transferred to the notorious concentration camp at Dachau, where they are believed to remain. The German rulers have endeavoured to cover with the silence of Poland—that eloquent silence that speaks to the whole world—what may well be the most brutal crime of the century.

It was not only the University of Cracow that suffered under the impact of German domination. All the professors of the Cracow Mining Academy were arrested with the Cracow professors ; and all the directors of secondary and of elementary schools in Cracow were also arrested. The professors of the higher and secondary schools of Cracow were deported into the interior of Germany ; their fate remains unknown. The professors of the University of Lublin, many of whom were priests, were imprisoned.

Fate of the Imprisoned Professors of Poznan University

The professors of Poznan University, it was stated early in 1940, who had remained in this ancient capital of Poland, or who had returned after military operations were over, were seized as hostages, or were imprisoned. One of the most notable of these was the octogenarian, Professor Dembinski, who succumbed to the illtreatment accorded to him in the concentration camp of Glowna, near Poznan. Professor Dembinski was an historian of world-wide reputation, a D.Litt. *honoris causa* of Oxford

University, a great linguist, a brilliant speaker, and a man of charm, wit, and humour.* All this did not prevent the German barbarians from considering Professor Dembinski, at the age of 82, a fit subject to be done to death in a concentration camp. Yet another professor of Poznan University was killed by Nazi barbarity. Professor Michael Sobeski, it was learnt in February, 1940, died of pneumonia, contracted while being deported in a cattle truck during several days' journey in a frost of 20 degrees F. A former Minister of Education in Vienna, Professor Cwiklinski, aged over 80, was driven insane by his treatment after arrest.

The most terrible fate was that of those professors of Poznan University who were imprisoned in the dungeons of Fort VII in Poznan prison, a building which the Nazi authorities used as a training ground for prison guards. Among the professors of Poznan University imprisoned in Fort VII, were Professor R. Paczkowski of the Chair of Civil Law, Professor S. Kalandyk of the Chair of Physics, Professor Smosarski of the Chair of Meteorology, Professor Nowakowski of the Chair of Surgery, and Professor Edward Klich, a noted philologist. Professor Kalandyk died in this torture house. The fate of the other professors imprisoned in Fort VII is unknown. The fate of the former Rector of Poznan University, Professor S. Pawlowski, is also unknown ; this well-known geographer and Vice-President of the International Geographical Union, was forced to do hard labour in Poznan prison, and was then sent to a camp in Germany. It was reported in February, 1940, that the University of Poznan had been seized and transformed into a German institution.

Professor of Protestant Theology Beaten to Death

After the German occupation of Warsaw was completed the doyen of the faculty of Protestant Theology in the University, and one of the most distinguished representatives of the Evangelical Church in Poland, Dr. Edmund Bursche, was imprisoned. Dr. Bursche was put to work in the stone quarries, in the concentration camp of Mauthausen in Austria, on July 26, 1940. It is an interesting illustration of Nazi methods that this Evangelical theologian and

* *Times*, 30.1.40.

BIBLIOTEKA Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego

professor of Warsaw University, aged over 70, was not only imprisoned with hard labour, but, later, was beaten to death.*

Suppression of all University Organisations

The murderous war waged by German rulers in Poland on distinguished scientists was continued in 1941. In August, 1941, the Gestapo arrested about sixty professors of the University of Lwow (Lemberg), and of the Lwow Technical College, after the Soviet evacuation of the city. These arrests included Professors Rencki, Sieradzki, and Ostrowski, Professors of Medicine, Professor Grek a well-known jurist, and Professor Pilat, aged 70, an authority on oil. Their fate is unknown ; but it is known that the former Polish Prime Minister, the eminent scientist Professor Kazimir Bartel, was murdered by the Gestapo, after his arrest in August.† Professor Bartel was taken to Berlin, treated kindly, and offered a post in a " quisling " government. When he refused he was taken back to Lwow and shot. In October, 1941, news was received of the murders of Professor Pienkowski, a well-known Polish professor of physics, and a member of the Warsaw Mathematical and Physical Institute ; of Professor Kazimierz Broniewski, to whom is partly due the discovery of adrenalin ; and of Dr. Ludwik Sokolowski, who was the discoverer of new methods of curing tuberculosis.

In May, 1942, it was learnt, in London, that Professor Witold Staniszkis of the Warsaw Agricultural College, and Professor Roman Rybarski of Warsaw University, have died, the victims of torture, in German concentration camps.‡

It was announced that, by the end of September, 1940, all Polish universities and university extension work would cease to exist. On the 2nd of November was notified the nomination by the German authorities of an official who would supervise this liquidation in Central Poland ; similar officials having been already appointed for Western Poland. Those professors who were not in concentration camps or in prison were deprived of all means of livelihood,

* *Times*, 30.12.40.

† *Times*, 27.8.41 ; 31.10.41.

‡ *Times*, 21.5.42.

being unable to get any work. All teaching by lecture courses, publications, etc., has been forbidden. All organisations such as the Association of University Professors and Docents, and the Union of University Assistants, have been disbanded. It is intended that the people of Poland should be completely robbed of any intellectual life.

Suppression of all Polish Schools

The German effort to destroy, from the very roots, all Polish education has by no means been confined to the wholesale arrests of professors and head masters. School teachers have been ruthlessly " uprooted "—*ausgerotten.* Thus in the town of Bydgoszcz all Polish teachers were turned out, in the cruel winter of 1939, when the victims of Nazi " protection " were being despatched to unknown destinations, in locked cattle trucks, without food or heat. Soon after the occupation of Warsaw eighty teachers were thrown into prison. In Cracow, after the deportation of the university professors, the teachers precipitately went into hiding in order to avoid a similar fate. Six months after the conclusion of hostilities it was reported that the majority of Polish teachers had been deported to Nazi concentration camps. Only the minority consented to assist German teachers who had been sent to teach Polish children although themselves ignorant of the Polish language. All private teaching is punished by long terms of imprisonment. The present generation of teachers may be said to have disappeared ; and the utter destruction intended by the German authority for Polish education is apparent in the single fact that the opening of training colleges for teachers has been forbidden ; it will be recalled that Poland in 1933 had two hundred of these colleges, with 30,000 students.

Teachers' organisations have been disbanded, their property confiscated, and their buildings used for other purposes. The work of repairing or re-constructing war-damaged buildings was blocked by the freezing of all funds possessed by educational institutions ; and the refusal of all aid, whether in material, funds, or labour, by the Nazi authorities. Only the elementary schools and trade schools were allowed to remain open. The schools

lack text-books even in such subjects as are allowed, since new editions are not being published. Owing to the confiscation of former Polish language manuals the country children now often learn to read from prayer-books.

Suppression of Historical Truth

In the elementary schools the teaching of Polish history and geography has been abolished.* "Truth," wrote *The Times*, "is being expunged from the records of the past as unscrupulously as it is being suppressed in the news of the present." † A circular issued to all elementary school teachers, and made obligatory, succeeded in expunging truth both from the past and the present. School teachers were told, on pain of suppression and the closing of the school, to teach the Polish children that the Sovereign State of Poland, with its thousand years of constitutional history, collapsed because it was an artificial creation, and that it will never be restored again. And Polish school children must not only cease to think as Poles, they must cease to look like Poles; the wearing of the Polish school uniforms has been forbidden. The Polish schools in Western Poland have been closed down, and the Polish children have to go to German schools, where the only subjects taught are the German language, arithmetic, and gymnastics. One class might number as many as two hundred children. After a year of German occupation in Western Poland the secondary and academic schools remained closed as the authorities of occupation would not permit their reopening. All technical equipment of schools had been removed.

Nazi School Teachers' Qualifications

It is interesting to note the Nazi standard of qualifications for an elementary school teacher. An advertisement has appeared in the *Ostdeutscher Beobachter*:

"Teachers wanted. Persons wishing to devote themselves to this profession may apply even though they have not had the requisite education and training."

Gauleiter Greiser, addressing teachers in his Eastern

* *Times*, 25.10.40.

† *Times*, 28.10.40.

territory, urged that " the teachers must sow loathing (*Abscheu*) for the Poles."* And Reich Minister of Education Herr Rust, has pointed out the essential qualifications for a Nazi elementary school teacher :

" The German elementary school teacher is far more like a political director than a professional teacher. He should behave more like a soldier than a man from intellectual spheres."†

The fact that the Nazi elementary school teachers are required to behave more like Nazi " political directors " than professional teachers may account for the treatment of Polish pupils at the German schools which were opened at Bydgoszcz. These children were " made to carry out heavy manual labour, so as, according to Nazi officials ' to break their rebellious spirit.' "‡ Poland may well be proud of her valiant school children.

The Polish people, under German rule, have suffered the destruction of their universities, their schools, and as we shall see, of their scientific institutes and equipment, their libraries, their newspapers, journals and books. The German war upon the mind of Poland has been waged by the brutal and inhuman methods of the Nazi concentration camp, and of the ruthless Nazi police, the Gestapo. It is quite in harmony with Nazi rule that the building of the Polish Ministry of Education in Warsaw should have been taken over by the Gestapo ; the University of Warsaw buildings by the Nazi *Sicherheitspolizei*—the " Security Police," and the Warsaw Students Hostel as Nazi police barracks.

* *Times, ibid.*

† *Breslauer Neueste Nachrichten,* 12.6.41.

‡ *Daily Telegraph,* 4.1.40.

CHAPTER III

ORGANISED DESTRUCTION OF POLISH SCIENCE AND LITERATURE

"The methodic and continuous destruction of Polish culture goes on without respite." Broadcast by General Sikorski, Polish Prime Minister, June, 1942.

THE German attempt to murder the mind of Poland has not been limited to destruction of Polish schools and Polish universities. In addition to wholesale demolition in the field of education the Nazi regime has organised a no less wholesale destruction of Polish books, publishing houses, libraries, newspapers, periodicals and radio. The barbarous mentality that imagines it possible to destroy a literature by fire and paper-pulping machines links the Nazi of the twentieth century with those Saracenic hordes of the seventh century who destroyed the noblest library of antiquity, that of Alexandria, on the ingenuous principle that if the books therein agreed with the Koran they were needless, and if they did not they were pernicious, and in either case they should be destroyed. The German destroyers have carried out their assault on the written word of Poland with the savage ferocity of the barbarians who plundered Rome and Alexandria, fifteen hundred years ago.

Eight Centuries of Polish Literature

As in the case of the Polish language, and of the Polish schools and seats of learning, the literature which the German plunderers have sought to destroy has a history of some eight centuries. Chronicles written in Latin, and liturgical manuscripts, appear in the twelfth century. In the later mediæval ages Poland had her distinguished Latin writers on philosophy, history and science. Then, in the reign of Casimir the Great, in the fourteenth century, Polish culture came in touch with the earliest phase of the Renaissance. Italian influence was strengthened in the following century by the activities of Erasmus Ciolek, Bishop of Plock. Ciolek was a patron of the arts, and a scientist; and was *persona grata* at the Court of Pope Julius II when on political missions to Italy. In the

sixteenth century the Polish Court was thronged with Italians, King Sigismund I having married a princess of the Sforza family of Milan ; and Italian was spoken familiarly in the streets of Cracow. In this century Poland began to produce literary classics in her own language, although the famous work on political philosophy written during this period by the Polish author Andreas Fricius, *De Emendanda Republica*, was published in Latin. This book had a wide vogue throughout Europe.

The first printed books appeared in Poland as early as 1475, in the Synodial Statutes of Konrad, Bishop of Wroclaw ; and in the following century a characteristic of the times was said to be " the inclination of all classes for reading." During the reign of Sigismund I (1506–1548) few Polish gentlemen could be found who could not speak three or four languages, and all spoke Latin. When the Polish deputation arrived in Paris to offer the crown of Poland to Henri de Valois, in 1573, what most astonished the French, says De Thou, " was the facility with which they expressed themselves in Latin, French, German and Italian. These four languages were as familiar to them as their native tongue."* It will be seen that Polish culture is no mushroom growth.

Although the seventeenth century was a time of disastrous invasions of Poland, by all the neighbouring States, there was at this time an amazing output of interesting Polish literature. And this period marks the beginning of the French influence which was to be productive of so much in the following century, the last century of the continuous existence of Poland as a free and sovereign State. It was in the seventeenth century that a Polish poet translated the Cid of Corneille ; and the hero king John Sobieski, the saviour of Europe from the Moslem armies, had a pleasant weakness for reading such sentimental French novels as those of d'Urfe and Mlle. Scudery. The first examples of the Polish press appeared in Warsaw in the seventeenth century. These were not only the official gazette called *The Monitor*, but also a number of didactic weekly papers on the model of the famous English *Spectator*. The first political newspaper of Poland was published in the seventeenth century under the name of

* De Thou, *Hist. Univ.*, VI, 699.

Domestic and Foreign News. It is in this century, also, that, as Professor Dyboski notes, " Catholic learning in Poland's eastern borderlands was the motive force of a truly amazing predominance of Polish culture and even of the Polish language among the eastern Christians of Russia and of the Ukrainian lands."*

In the eighteenth century Warsaw became a centre of cultural activity, under the enlightened guidance of Poland's last king, Stanislaus Augustus ; and Polish literature developed into a second golden age. Polish drama began to flourish with the newly opened theatre in Warsaw. A striking feature of the period were the political classics which Poland produced on the eve of her dismemberment.

An enslaved and divided Poland continued her creative activity in thought and art throughout the nineteenth century. This was the century when the greatest of Polish poets, Adam Mickieviez, compared by George Sand to Byron and to Goethe, won a European reputation ; and when two Polish novelists, H. Sienkiewicz, author of the world-famed *Quo Vadis*, and W. Reymont, author of the prose epic *The Peasants*, gained the Nobel Prize. An extremely interesting and unique element in Polish literature, during the hundred and fifty years of enslavement, is that this literature and especially Polish poetry, as Georg Brandes pointed out, " came to supply as it were the place of a national life which was lost at the partition of Poland."

When, in 1918, the position of Poland as a free independent State was restored, the young poets of the new Poland inherited a great poetical tradition. There has been a large output of Polish fiction during the twenty years of freedom ; and at the end of the first ten years of independence the number of Polish newspapers had doubled, and amounted to 2,200. In 1928 the Polish specialised press covered such diverse subjects as religion (70 publications), medicine (40), education (30), law (15), engineering (20), economics (50) and agriculture (50) ; and included research journals, and historical, literary and political reviews. The merest outline of the history of Polish literature from the twelfth to the twentieth century

* *Poland*, Professor Roman Dyboski, p. 33.

disproves the monstrous claim of Nazi propagandists that the culture of Poland is negligible. Whether in a sovereign State, or in a State dismembered and enslaved, the creative mind of Poland has never ceased from activities recognised by all civilised nations.

Destruction of Polish Books

The German assault on the mind of Poland was planned as carefully as was the assault on the almost defenceless body of the nation, that assault delivered without warning when the German bombers roared over the Polish frontiers at dawn on September 1, 1939. Within less than six months Nazi absolutism had shown itself to be the negation of civilisation ; and for the first time in the history of modern Europe the world watched, aghast, the attempted murder of a nation, soul, mind and body.

How did the German invaders endeavour to destroy the mind of Poland? It was in January, 1940, only five months after the invasion and subjection of Poland by the Nazi armies, that Mr. Winston Churchill, speaking on Poland on January 27, reminded a Manchester audience that " It is estimated that upwards of 15,000 intellectual leaders have been shot." Those not shot were in prison, a measure that was part of the deliberate Nazi system for Poland :—" The imprisonment of all Polish intellectual leaders has been made a rule " was the statement published in this same month.* Already, in the last month of 1939, all Polish newspapers and journals had been suppressed.† A few weeks later the position was summed up in a report received by the Polish Government, then established in France :—" Every attempt is being made to crush Polish culture and learning."‡

Destruction of Libraries

The effort to crush Polish culture and learning has included the wholesale destruction of immense quantities of books. Thus the great library of the University of Warsaw was rapidly destroyed by the Nazi Field Police,

* *Times*, 24.1.40.
† *Tablet*, 9.12.39.
‡ *Daily Telegraph*, 17.1.40.

who were quartered in the building. The libraries attached to the Chairs of Phonetics and Philology in this university were removed to Germany. From the famous Jagellonian Library in Cracow all the most famous books and manuscripts were removed ; the manuscripts dated back to 1410. The Order issued by the Governor-General for the removal of books extended to all the libraries in Cracow.

A more tragic fate was that of the library of the University of Poznan. The university was occupied, after the entry of the Germans, by the Nazi police who, instead of occupying the military barracks preferred to install themselves in the university halls and libraries ; the books found there were thrown out of windows or used for making fires. Everything that escaped devastation was loaded upon lorries and carried away. Not only was the library of the university confiscated but also the private libraries of the professors.*

The entire library of the Diet and the Senate, with all its wealth of legal, economic and social material, and the complete collection of the publications of foreign Parliaments and the collection of International Agreements was transported to Germany. The library of the State Archæological Museum was seized by the police under the direction of Dr. Ernest Petersen of the University of Rostock, and was also sent to Germany. Illuminated and other manuscripts, engravings and drawings, including nearly ten thousand drawings and prints from the Stanislaus August collection in the University of Warsaw Library and priceless manuscripts from the Zamoyski and Krasinski Libraries, were seized by a special commission numbering among its members Dr. Josef Muhlmann and Dr. Carl Kraus. The most valuable of the contents of the library of Prince Czartoryski were also seized. All Polish libraries have been closed in Western Poland. All the lending libraries of the Association of the People's Libraries, one of the principal Polish educational institutions in Poznan and Pomorze, have been destroyed. The Polish portions of very many large libraries, such as the Raczynski Library in Poznan have suffered destruction and confiscation. The specially valuable library of

* *Times*, 1.3.40.

STATUE of the great Polish astronomer, Copernicus, in the courtyard of the Jagellonian Library in Cracow. The fine Gothic building is now used by the Institute for German Labour in the East; the library has been looted.

THE Warsaw Opera House, a classical building, was erected in 1825. Besides the opera, it housed two other theatres. Only the front of the building with its columns has remained after the bombing of Warsaw, which totally destroyed the rest of the Opera House.

Bishop Okoniewski was burnt. Other valuable libraries have been either burnt or confiscated, including the library of the Silesian Institute and the libraries of the Seminaries of Plock and Wloclawek. Details transpired, last August (1941), of the pillage of the " theological " library of 50,000 volumes at Plock. The library was taken away to the State University Library at Koenigsberg. It included some hundred twelfth and thirteenth century MSS. and over three hundred early printed books dating from before 1500. Ten of the MSS. are unique. The Suwalki library of 8,000 volumes has also been taken away to Koenigsberg. In February, 1940, after five months of German rule, it was stated that " not a single Polish book could be seen, either in Poznan or Pomorze or Silesia." It was also made known in this month that Polish Cultural Societies had been dissolved and their property confiscated. Well might *The Times* declare, in its issue of March 1, 1940, that " everything is being destroyed which might contribute to the culture of the Polish people." The wholesale destruction of Polish books intended by the Nazi authority is evident from the amazing decree published in the *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* of March 12, 1940, requiring all " non-Germans " in Poland to register all the books in their possession.

Encouragement of Pornographic Books and Drama

The German administration of Poland deliberately permitted the publication, and even the hawking, of the filthiest of pornographic literature. This effort to poison the nation by books was reinforced by theatrical performances of a pornographic nature which the Polish youth were not only permitted, but were given special facilities to attend. Comments seem superfluous.

Prohibition of Sales of Polish Books

The Nazi administrators completed their first six months rule over Poland in April, 1940. By this time all libraries and bookshops in Western Poland were confiscated.

In the General Gouvernement the booksellers had to sign a declaration, on forms provided by the Gestapo, that they would withdraw all English and French books from sale, together with dictionaries, grammars, newspapers, maps

and all publications with Polish State emblems. Further, the sale of songs and of song-books containing the national music of Poland, or of the Western Powers, was prohibited; and all French music was included in this prohibition. Everything forbidden was packed up, sealed, and taken away from the bookshops. Thus, in the shops the whole department of foreign trade was limited to Russian and Italian books, which have never been very widely read in Poland, or else to German books. It is significant that the importation of books from Germany was hindered by complicated formalities. A decree of the German Commissar for the Polish Booksellers' Association, an official installed on May 1, forbade the sale of the publications of the Nazi Party to anyone but Germans. Already the sale of song-books with the Nazi songs had been banned. This is not surprising when we recall that the marching song of the 12,000,000 lads in the *Hitler Jugend*, the Hitler Youth Movement, is "Christus krepiere! Hitler-Jugend Marschieren!"—"Christ perish! Hitler Youth march!" And it is not difficult to realise the reluctance of the Nazi propagandists, doubtless still hoping for the discovery of Polish Quislings, to allow the pagan pages of Herr Rosenberg to be circulated in Poland. During the summer a decree was issued forbidding Polish booksellers to sell Nazi literature at all, as this right belonged exclusively to the newly-opened German bookshops. A peculiarly vindictive decree, signed by the *Referent fuer Deutsches Schrifttum*, was issued in May, requiring all booksellers to display prominently one of the anti-Polish propaganda publications, *Die Polen vor Berlin.* Later in the year a characteristic decree required that there should be an obvious separation between German and Polish books in the shop windows. In October it was stated that all Polish history and geography was suppressed in the teaching permitted in Polish elementary schools; all teaching "must now be given on material supplied in a periodical published by the German authorities."* This meant, of course, the prohibition of all sales of Polish history and geography books. In this month, also, all Polish writers, journalists and publishers were ordered to carry special identity cards authorising them to follow

* *Times*, 25.10.40.

their professions.* Finally, the German assault on the Polish publishers and booksellers during 1940 was continued with a circular issued on November 5, declaring that Polish firms had no right to sell works of a political or ideological nature ; the decision as to the nature of a book was to be determined by the local Nazi propaganda department ; Polish bookshops might only sell belles-lettres and reference books ; and this only when there was no German bookshop in the locality. The penalty for the non-observance of this decree was an unlimited fine. The local Nazi propaganda department in Warsaw does not appear to have been possessed of great intelligence. The department found a book for young children entitled " *Our Enemies*." It was about various birds of prey and garden and forest pests. The department ordered its withdrawal, on the grounds that " *Our Enemies* " was another name for Germans.

Needless to say the book trade in Poland has been closed to Jews, and all Jewish bookshops have been closed down. A circular of the Nazi Office of Propaganda forbade booksellers, under penalty of having their shop closed for a month, to sell any kind of literature to Jews, or to Aryans intending to sell or to lend anything to Jews.

The extent of the destruction of the Polish publishing and bookselling businesses can only be realised when it is remembered that the average number of publications appearing in Poland, yearly, has been about 8,000. Sixty per cent. of the stocks of Polish booksellers have been seized. And it was stated in January, 1941, that " a decree has been issued recently prohibiting all publishing activities in Polish. No more Polish books are to be published."†

All literary and journalistic activity finds expression only in the illegal press.

Confiscation of Scientific Installations and Museums

The scientific research, so brilliantly pursued in Polish universities and institutes, has been completely destroyed. This campaign has been carried out by the arrests of the leading scientists, and their internment in concentration

* *Times*, 15.10.40.

† *Sunday Times*, 12.1.41.

camps, a procedure that results only too frequently in the death of the victim ; and by the wholesale removal to Germany of scientific installations and equipment. The famous Institute of Experimental Physics in Warsaw, the pride of Polish scientists, the costly equipment of which was presented to the Institute by the Rockefeller Foundation, has been totally demolished ; the Hitler Government provided a special commission of German professors, who dismantled the whole installation of the Institute, and despatched it and all the instruments for scientific research to Germany. In all the shameless history of German aggression it may be doubted whether there is any incident that reveals more clearly the complete absence of accepted standards of human decency and honour in the Nazi mind than the fact that the German professors, who took part personally in the spoliation of the scientific institutions of Warsaw, were the very men who had visited Warsaw on previous occasions to take part in scientific congresses, and had enjoyed the proverbial Polish hospitality and kindness.

Particular odium attaches to the name of a Nazi Professor Richter who abstracted from the Warsaw Radium Institute one and a half grammes of radium presented to the Institute by the women of America in honour of Poland's great scientist, Madame Curie, *née* Sklodowska ; when taxed with the fact that Berlin had already fifteen grammes of radium Professor Richter replied that no consideration could interfere with any advantage for the Reich, and duly removed Poland's only grammes of radium. American women will surely recompense the Warsaw Institute ; and also deal faithfully with Professor Richter should he ever visit the United States. This attack on Polish science has added arson to theft ; scientific papers of the greatest value in the possession of Warsaw University were callously burnt.

Early in 1940, it was reported that " the German authorities are carrying out a systematic robbery of all Polish scientific and research centres, and everything valuable is being sent to Germany."* The Warsaw Zoological Museum was robbed under the supervision of a professor of the German University.† The Polish State

* *Times*, 24.1.40. † *Ibid.*

College for Agriculture and Forestry, in Warsaw, was stripped in a really German " scientific " manner. Three professors of the Forestry Academy in Eberswalde, Rubner, Buchholz and Hesse, assisted by the German students, supervised and personally helped in the dismantling of the whole scientific installation of the different sections of this college. The State Archæological Museum in Warsaw had all its more valuable contents confiscated together with the library and all its museum equipment.

The fate of Poznan University is no less tragic. All the scientific installations and collections of this University have been confiscated; numerous scientific manuscripts have been destroyed; and everything that escaped devastation was loaded on to lorries and carried away by the Nazi officials.

Arrests, torture and deaths of Polish scientists

The German policy for Poland is, quite clearly, a policy of the complete annihilation of the intellectual life of the nation. All scientific institutions must therefore be destroyed; and, further, all Polish men of science who have attained eminence whether as writers, lecturers or research workers must be either shot, or interned in a concentration camp, which is often the equivalent to a sentence of death by torture, imprisoned, or summarily dismissed. The fate of Poland's scientists has been no less cruel than that of her most distinguished men of letters, historians and jurists. Victoms of German hatred of Polish scientific research include Professor Loth, the most eminent of Poland's anatomists and anthropologists, who was imprisoned. A leading Polish scientist and mathematician, and Rector of the Technical College of Lwow (Lemberg), Professor Casimir Bartel, was murdered by the Gestapo, as already noted. Arrested in July, 1941, after the Soviet forces had left Lwow, Professor Bartel was shot by the Nazi police. He had decided not to leave Lwow, being much attached to the Technical College. His work had been purely scientific and humanitarian, since his retirement from politics in March, 1930. Professor Bartel was a student of Munich University, but neither this fact nor his position as the leading Polish scientist in Lwow influenced the brutal Nazi police. Professor Bartel was

very popular with the undergraduates of his university ; and was doubtless reluctant to abandon the college he loved.*

Professors were included in the lists of the intelligentsia of Poland, lawyers, doctors, journalists and men of letters, resident in Warsaw, who were turned out of their homes in December, 1939, and had their entire property confiscated, for the benefit of German officers and officials. Although 25 per cent. of the houses in Warsaw were then unfit for human habitation no provision, not even in the form of temporary huts, was made for the dispossessed and homeless educated community of the capital. To the question why no such provision was made for the evicted Poles one of the Gestapo officials replied " Why should we ? It would be waste of money to find accommodation for them, because in any case they are doomed to die of hunger or in some other form."

Out of the 180 professors and assistants of Cracow University who, as we have seen,† were so brutally arrested on November 6, 1939, and deported to the Sachsenhausen-Oranienberg concentration camp, near Berlin, six were distinguished scientists. It will be remembered that these professors and assistants, including eminent men of letters and scientists on whom European Universities had bestowed honorary degrees, and some of whom were over sixty years of age, were beaten almost daily, were put into prison dress, with shaved heads, and were forced to do hard manual labour. Among the leading men of science who died under these conditions was Professor Smolenski, who succumbed, at the age of sixty, after suffering brutal maltreatment. Professor Smolenski was chief geologist of the State Geological Institute, a member of the International Council for Oceanic Research, and the author of numerous scientific works. Another Polish scientist done to death in the Sachsenhausen camp was Professor Michael Siedlecki, the well-known biologist, and the greatest of Polish zoologists. As the always cautious and temperate *Times* states, Professor Siedlecki " *died in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, tortured to death by the Gestapo.*"‡ Professor Siedlecki was seventy years of

* *Times*, 27.8.41.

† *Supra*, pp. 13–16.

‡ *Times*, 30.1.40.

age. He held Honorary Chairs of Biology at the Universities of Strasbourg and Brussels ; and was Polish delegate to the International Council of Marine Exploration, and a Fellow of the Zoological Society of London. Professor Siedlecki was one of the professors of Cracow University arrested on November 6, 1939. The death roll of distinguished scientists of Cracow University arrested on that date includes, further, the astronomer, Professor Antoni Wilk ; Professor Nowak, Professor of Geology and a member of many scientific societies ; Professor Kostanecki, aged 76, Professor of Comparative Anatomy, who held an honorary degree at Aberdeen University ; and Professor Rogozinski, Professor of Physiology. It must be realised, however difficult of realisation in this enlightened twentieth century such facts may be, that these scholars and scientists died from brutal maltreatment and torture, and not by natural deaths. Truly the soil of Poland has become the soil of martyrdom.

Annihilation of the Polish Press

The war upon the mind of Poland has extended to the annihilation of the Polish press. In 1939 Poland possessed a widely developed press of 2,700 papers. These included some 200 dailies, over 400 weeklies, 250 fortnightlies, and about 1,000 monthlies. This Polish press has been entirely destroyed. Only official Nazi publications, printed either in Polish or in German, are allowed. All free publication in Polish is forbidden. The property of Polish presses has been confiscated. The Polish people has to look for news and political guidance in the secret newspapers which appear in large numbers, in spite of the greatest difficulties, and in the face of the threats of ruthless reprisals. These Polish papers are printed chiefly in small pages, or multigraphed. Journalists who are true Poles naturally take no part in the publishing of papers edited by the Nazis. The papers printed in Polish are Nazi productions intended for Polish consumption. The papers printed in German are designed chiefly for the consumption of Nazi officials ; and include ruthless propaganda, disseminating scorn and hatred of everything Polish, present and past.

German Purge of Polish Lending Libraries

Not content with the destruction of libraries, and of the whole book-publishing and bookselling trade and of the Polish press, the Nazi conquerors have proscribed, in the area of the General Gouvernement, all books that they consider to be undesirable. The method adopted for carrying out this particular offensive on the mind of Poland is interesting. The Nazi Controller over the Polish Booksellers' Association, who assumed office on May 1, 1940, issued a decree ordaining that all lending libraries, if they wished to remain in existence, must join the Association. This decree subordinated all the lending libraries to one control. The first order issued was for the removal of all English and French books. In June, 1940, all Jewish lending libraries were closed ; and a circular was issued early in July forbidding Polish lending libraries to issue books to Jews. Then, in August, an order appeared according to which additions to libraries could only be made by permission.

The Nazi censor has aimed at wiping out all memory of the existence of the free and independent Poland of 1918–1939. Anyone less fatuous than a Nazi censor would have realised that the forcible suppression of all books referring to this period would only make the memory more precious. Everything that could possibly recall those twenty years of progress and reconstruction, enjoyed by the Polish people, has been removed ; reference books, works dealing with public affairs, collections of speeches made in the Polish Parliament, biographies of Polish politicians, books relating to Paderewski, have all been confiscated. Polish history, from the war of 1914–18, has been rigorously banned. No book is allowed describing the Polish Constitution of May, 1791 ; that Constitution which gave Poland a really modern administrative system, and is, admittedly, the earliest Liberal Constitution to be framed in Europe. Even the sixteenth century work of the Polish author Andreas Fricius *De emendanda Republica*, which, as we have seen, had a vogue throughout Europe, has been banned by German terrorists, who fear, with good reason, the truth about the age-long national culture of Poland. The ban on Polish history includes the

legendary history of the ninth century. It extends to the writings of many authors on social and economic history. Memoirs dealing with Polish habits and customs have been removed. All books concerning Polish geography have been banned ; and also, of course, all books encouraging the love of the Poles for their own country. Polish works on the co-operative movement are forbidden ; the writings of Roman Dmowski, leader of the National Democratic Party, have been proscribed ; and even those of W. Studnicki, for many years an advocate of Polish-German collaboration, have not been spared.

Masterpieces of Polish literature have been banned such as Adam Mickiewicz's poem *Konrad Wallenrod*, which has been translated into the majority of European languages. Not only is the circulation of separate editions of this poem forbidden, but pages containing it are to be torn out of volumes in the libraries, and all literary studies dealing with the poem have to be withdrawn. All books relating to the great Polish astronomer Copernicus are forbidden ; and also those concerning another world-famous Pole, Kosciuszko. Kosciuszko, it will be recalled, served in the American war of independence, and was promoted by Washington to be brigadier, and afterwards to be Governor of West Point, on the Hudson. When Poland is liberated from the German barbarians, surely America will take special pride in replacing in her libraries the literature relating to Kosciuszko.

It is not without interest to find that, as in the Third Reich, all anti-Bolshevik books have been banned ; and also, with a fine impartiality, all Communist literature, including the works of Lenin. Anything which recalled, even if only by the title, outstanding feats of Polish arms, or achievements of Polish political thought, has been forbidden ; and so has the most popular of Polish novels, the historic Trilogy by the author of *Quo Vadis*, Henry Sienkiewicz. It need hardly be said that the Nazi administrators attacked, with evident animosity, books dedicated to Polish national and State ideology. Also, all books on Polish folk-lore and popular tradition have been condemned, indeed everything on *das polnische Volkstum*. This ban includes collections of Polish folk songs, and ethnological works. It is even stated that books have been

condemned simply for having the word Poland in the titles. Anything is possible under a regime which forbids the Poles access to all books on the Scout Movement, especially those by Baden Powell ; and all books on sailing.

The procedure adopted in Warsaw is instructive. All lending libraries in the Warsaw district were compelled to present their catalogues for inspection. Not quite a fortnight later the catalogues were returned with deletions. A new ordinance demanded that those works which had been crossed out of the catalogue should be removed from the shelves, and sent to the Propaganda Office, together with an inventory in triplicate. At the same time it was ordered that a new catalogue must be made, this time without the cancelled books ; and only this new catalogue was to be made available to the public. This catalogue was to be prepared as a single list of titles in alphabetical order ; and the classification of works into sections, such as educational, literature and books for the young, was forbidden. Clearly it was desired to make the principles of proscription less obvious. Failure to obey these orders entailed the closing down of the libraries, the confiscation of their books, and a fine. Such proscription, put into effect at lightning speed, must have been planned long in advance.

Suppression of Polish Radio

Deprived of books and of newspapers the people of Poland would naturally turn with increased eagerness to radio. This contingency has been fully guarded against by the German rulers. To listen to a Polish broadcast from foreign stations is a heavily punishable crime. The population has been ordered to surrender all their radio sets. The penalty for listening to foreign broadcasts, especially English ones, is long-term imprisonment or death. The *Danziger Vorposten* of February 22, 1941, stated that the Grudziadz Court delivered a death sentence to Pelagja Bernatowicz for listening to a Polish broadcast from London, and sentences of ten, eight and three years of hard labour in prison to other people accused of the same crime. In August, 1941, items in the German press in Poland revealed that sentences of hard labour for the

" crime " of listening to foreign wireless stations were increasing in number. A sentence was passed, in Poznan, of nine years hard labour for listening to London, and distributing B.B.C. news to Polish friends ; and for the same offence a woman was sentenced to eight years hard labour. In a town in Pomorze Province a sentence of seven years hard labour was imposed for listening to the B.C.C. " and discussing the news with Polish friends." The friends also received long sentences.*

Before the German invasion the number of wireless owners in Poland was over a million ; a far larger number, it may be noted, than in Italy. Poland also possessed eleven large State broadcasting stations which have been taken over by the Nazi authorities ; documents and material have been taken away or destroyed ; and the staff of the Polish Radio, numbering about 1,000 persons and comprising authors, scholars, popular lecturers, musicians and actors, have, of course, lost their positions. It will be a glad day for liberated Poland when the voices of her writers, lecturers and actors, and the music and songs of her musicians and singers are heard again on their native air.

CHAPTER IV

DESTRUCTION OF POLISH ART

Centuries Old National Art in Poland

THE history of art in Poland extends over nine hundred years ; for painting, music, drama, sculpture and architecture were encouraged in Poland as early as the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It is interesting to note that Polish illuminated MSS. of the eleventh century show a preponderating Celtic influence, due to the Irish MSS. which reached Poland from Leodium and Würtzburg. During the Middle Ages there existed a distinct school of Polish art ; and in spite of foreign influences in the fifteenth century, art in Poland yet maintained, in the

* *Times*, 15.8.41.

Gothic and Renaissance periods, a national stamp. It is probable that the Polish Art Guilds were spiritually and numerically strong enough to maintain this national character. The Guild of Painters in Cracow was instituted in 1410. The Wroclaw Guild, according to Alvin Schultz produced, between 1345 and 1523, no less than one hundred and fifty masters. Poznan also possessed its Art Guild. The custom of these Guilds was " to send their best apprentices for two years study abroad, whence they returned laden with a rich spoil of technical knowledge."*

Among the artists of the fifteenth century the sculptor and engraver Wit Stwosz† is credited with being the greatest realistic master of Northern art of his time. His masterpiece, the triptych above the High Altar of the Church of Our Lady in Cracow had survived all the partitions of Poland until the German invaders removed this precious heritage of art to Germany. Valuable paintings by the sixteenth century artist Jan Suess, of Kulmbach, have also been removed from this church, with characteristic Nazi violence.

Italian influence dominated Polish art in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries ; and at the close of the seventeenth century the influence of the Dutch and Flemish schools is apparent. It is significant of the position of Polish engraving in this century that the engraver Falk Polonus was appointed " painter royal " at the Courts of France, Holland, Denmark and Sweden. The fame of Polish engravers was maintained in the eighteenth century by D. Chodowiecki. In the reign of King Stanislaus Augustus, the last king of Poland and an ardent supporter of the arts, a taste for the study of art began to spread through the country ; and art professorships were founded at the Universities of Cracow and of Wilno. In the nineteenth century we find a vigorous expansion of Polish art, coincident with the opening of the Warsaw School of Art ; and in 1859 there was founded in Warsaw the first permanent art exhibition in Poland, arranged by the Society for Encouragement of the Fine Arts.

* *Poland's Case for Independence*. 1916. Essay by Jan de Holewinski, pp. 231 *et seq.*

† Known as Veit Stoss. He made Cracow his home as being a centre of cultural and artistic activity.

The dawn of the twentieth century saw pictorial art in Poland in touch with dominant contemporary currents of Western Europe, and well represented by Polish artists. In 1914 an imposing building was erected for the Warsaw School of Art. In the free Poland, re-created in 1918, Polish arts and Polish artists entered into their own. Government assistance took the form of scholarships, subsidies, prizes and purchases for State collections, as far as Poland's financial condition allowed. Periodical exhibitions were organised, not only at Warsaw and Cracow, but also at Poznan, Lwow, Lodz and Wilno. Polish art during the last twenty years has been full of vitality ; and has shown creative vigour in the formation of various groups, each distinguished by its own characteristics. Thus there were the *Præsens* Group of ultra-modernists ; the Plastic Art Group of Poznan ; the Academic Group, centred at Cracow, called " Art " ; the brilliant and active Wilno Group characterised by a new classicism ; the strong young anti-impressionist group at Warsaw, called " Rhythm " ; and the group of young painters united in Cracow under the name of The Unicorn.

" There is no end," wrote Professor Dyboski in 1933, " to the formation of new groups of young artists, and new and promising organisations have made their appearance at Warsaw, Cracow and even in the industrial city of Lodz within the last three or four years."*

A tragic sentence when we realise the utter destruction that was to be meted out, only six years later, to this vigorous young life.

Polish sculpture has enriched churches, and the houses of the Polish nobles, and has commemorated national heroes in monuments, since the tenth century. The Polish sculptors of the last twenty years have shown themselves abreast with the tendencies of modern art ; and many have won distinction in Paris, Munich and Vienna.

In regard to applied arts Polish tapestries in the eighteenth century rivalled those of the Gobelins and of Aubusson ; and, towards the end of the century, the perfection of Polish cabinet-making, bookbinding, carpets, pottery and watchmaking had won world-wide recognition.

* *Poland*, Roman Dyboski, 1933, p. 373.

A very active Society of Applied Art flourished in Cracow early in the present century, founded by J. Warchalowski, whose influence may be compared with that of William Morris in England. With the reunion and deliverance of Poland in 1918 the new Polish Government took applied art under its protection, and organised a number of new arts and crafts schools. Polish work achieved notable successes at the Decorative Arts Exhibition in Paris, in 1925. Summing up the whole field of recent Polish effort, " in the way of carrying art and beauty into the daily life and daily surroundings of the people," Professor Dyboski declares that " we may say without exaggeration that the noble band of ' Applied Art ' workers has rescued decorative art in Poland from subjection to the commonplace standards of international industrialism, and secured for it a distinctive note of its own harmonised with national tradition."*

Polish Music

The soul of Poland is said to be revealed with special clearness in Polish music. " All the inborn sublimity of a people cries out through Chopin," declared Liszt. Throughout Polish history music has been an integral part of Poland's national life. In Polish music there speaks the " unchained spirit of Poland which no Government has ever been able to fetter."†

Polish canticles date from the tenth century. Composers flourished in Poland from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries ; and in the latter century music was greatly promoted by Kings Sigismund I and Sigismund II. It may be questioned whether in any other European country music was held in such high honour as it was in Poland at the close of the sixteenth and in the seventeenth century. Music maintained its position in the Poland of the eighteenth century ; and in 1778 the first Polish opera was performed.‡ Early in the nineteenth century the genius of Chopin brought to Polish music world-wide recognition ; and during the twenty years of Polish freedom (1919-1939) the musical tradition of the country

* *Poland*, R. Dyboski, 1933, p. 387.

† *Poland's Case for Independence*, pp. 267 *et seq.*

‡ Italian Opera had been given at the Court of Warsaw since 1633.

has been generously maintained. The Association of Polish Choral Societies was founded ; opera in Warsaw received a munificent subsidy ; state-supported musical academies were set up ; and competent inspection of all teaching of music was introduced into the Polish schools. In 1933 Poland possessed over seventy schools of music ; and nine musical periodicals were published.

It is impossible to conclude even the slightest outline of Polish achievement in music without paying tribute to the memory of Poland's great musician and patriot, Paderewski. Early in the present century, when Poland was lying prostrate under the triple aggression of Germany, Austria and Russia, Paderewski declared " The vision of a strong and independent Poland has been the lodestar of my existence. Its realisation is still the great aim of my life." That aim was realised when M. Paderewski became the first Prime Minister of the reborn Poland in 1919. The vision remained with the great musician when Poland lay again prostrate, and " bleeding from a thousand wounds," in 1939. " Poland is immortal. . . we shall deliver her from her captivity," he proclaimed in the address, instinct with the spirit of Christian Poland, delivered on his election to the office of President of the National Council of Poland on January 3, 1940. In the marvellous art and the impassioned patriotism of Paderewski the soul of Poland has indeed found expression.

Drama in Poland

Polish drama, as is the case with all European drama, originated in the religious Mystery Plays, representations of which are recorded in Cracow Cathedral in the eleventh century. Italian opera appears in Poland towards the end of the seventeenth century ; and it is interesting to recall that the *Mariage de Figaro*, by Beaumarchais, was played in a translation at the palace of Prince Radziwill, even before it had been performed in Paris. Poland owes her first public theatre, opened in 1775, to her last king, the enlightened Stanislaus Augustus. By the end of the eighteenth century Cracow, Warsaw, Poznan, Lwow, and Wilno all had their theatrical companies. The vigorous development of the Polish theatre has continued on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries ; and in the latter

part of the nineteenth century the great Polish actress Modjeska captivated English-speaking audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. The restored Poland of our own day possessed twenty-four large theatres, three of which were opera-houses, and many smaller theatres. The company of players formed in 1919 under the name of *Reduta* reached a very high level of accomplishment, and worked both in Warsaw and in the provinces. Modern Poland has produced competent dramatic authors ; and special interest has been shown in peasant dramatic art. The restored Poland of the twentieth century created, through the Polish Ministry of Education, a special Department of Folk Theatres, for the promotion of Village Dramatic Associations. This movement corresponded to the social importance of the peasantry in the reborn Poland of 1919.

Polish Architecture A.D. 1000–1939

Polish architecture owes its earliest Romanesque examples to the Benedictine and Cistercian builders of the eleventh century. The position of Poland midway between Western and Eastern civilisations is strikingly illustrated in some Polish churches in which the central plan of a Byzantine basilica is preserved together with characteristic Romanesque details. Gothic architecture first appeared in Poland when the Abbey of Sulejow was built in 1232 ; a fine example, that of the beautiful Gothic church of the Poor Clares at Zawichost, was built in 1259. Gothic architecture zealously promoted by the Franciscans and the Premonstratensians, reigned supreme in Poland from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, in the national form known as Vistula Gothic. Renaissance building marks the sixteenth century ; and Poland possesses two of the finest specimens of Renaissance architecture in Europe in the royal palace of the Wawel in Cracow and the Sigismund chapel, that northern Pearl of the Renaissance, in the Cathedral of the Wawel. Throughout the sixteenth century magnificent palaces were built for the Polish nobles ; and no less magnificent town halls were erected by wealthy citizens. The new Poland not only produced modern architects, but also did all in its power to maintain Poland's ancient architectural glories ; thus a decree of 1928 made compulsory

INTERIOR of the cathedral of Pelplin, the largest church in Pomorze. It was erected in the beginning of the XIVth century by the Cistercians, while the Baroque organ was added in the XVIIIth century. The Germans used the cathedral at first as a garage and then as a market hall.

INTERIOR of St. Mary's church in Cracow. The triptych over the main altar, made by the great XVth century sculptor Wit Stwosz, was removed from the church and taken to Germany.

the registration of all Polish ancient buildings and monuments.

Even the shortest survey of the records of Polish achievement in the arts of painting, sculpture, music and architecture, and in the applied arts, is in itself sufficient to demolish the fatuous and ignorant pretension of the German invaders that Polish culture is a thing of no account. The thoroughness with which the barbarians of the twentieth century are endeavouring to destroy a culture which so greatly condemns them, is, in itself, a proof of its importance. Here are proofs of that thoroughness.

Nazi Destruction of Polish Art

"*It goes without saying that the German administration cannot in any way encourage the existence of Polish cultural life*" is the incredible opening sentence of a circular issued by the Nazi "Department of Popular Education and Propaganda" for Central Poland, on June 3, 1940.* Here is the complacent expression of a deliberate intention to gradually destroy the spirit and mind of a conquered people. We have seen with what murderous ruthlessness this destruction has been attempted in Poland in the domains of education, literature and science. The shooting squad, and the bestial tortures of the Nazi concentration camps and prisons, have accounted for the lives of innumerable Polish men of letters, scientists, historians, lawyers and research workers. Libraries, scientific collections, equipment and data, records, inscriptions have been savagely destroyed. What has the German conqueror achieved in the destruction of Polish art? Has the German rage also expended its barbarous fury on Polish painting, music, drama, sculpture, monuments and architecture?

Destruction of Works of Art in Poland

All exhibitions of paintings, sculpture, and work in black and white are forbidden. Artists' societies are disbanded. Artists and art dealers have to carry special identity cards authorising them to carry on their professions. Pictures can be sold only in cafés, bookshops or on the street, and then only if the subjects have passed the Nazi

* "Es ist selbstverständlich dass keine deutsche Dienststelle in irgend einer Weise das Polnische Kulturleben fördert."—Circular of June 3, 1940.

censor. Thus all pictures with any Polish national significance are banned, and this order holds good for any kind of reproduction. Polish artists are being simply starved out of existence. The collections of the National Art Gallery at Warsaw have been removed in their entirety to Germany ; and the Germans took special care to destroy all the catalogues, so as to prevent their restoration. Frescoes of historic value, such as those in the royal apartments attached to the Monastery of Jasna Gora, which contains the great Polish shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, have been wantonly destroyed by the Nazi Secret Police. Within three months of the conclusion of the German invasion of Poland a decree was published, on December 21, 1939, ordering that all works of art, whether in public or in private ownership, should be sequestrated. This decree ordained that, throughout the whole of Poland, everyone in possession of works of art must, under threat of imprisonment, declare the same before officials appointed by the Nazi authorities.* This, of course, is cultural plunder, open and unashamed.

Art schools are closed ; the documentary materials of the Warsaw and provincial art societies have been largely confiscated and scattered. The closing of the art schools, and the ban on exhibitions, have struck a double blow. The continuity of artistic effort has been broken ; and the influx of new forces has been stopped. In Warsaw alone some hundred and fifty artists have been without means of subsistence. In Poland the number of professional artists was about two thousand. To-day some are working as bricklayers' labourers, glaziers, waiters or drivers, seizing eagerly on any kind of employment that comes their way. Poverty and illness take their toll ; so do discouragement and despair ; so does the shooting squad. Almost as these words are written the news is published of the shooting in Warsaw of one of the most eminent of Polish painters, Tadeusz Pruszkowski. A frequent exhibitor abroad, Pruszkowski was also a teacher of outstanding ability, and Principal of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. The youth who gathered round him showed their artistic promise.

A short two years ago there was, as we have seen, " no

* *Warschauer Zeitung*, 21.12.39.

end to the formation of new groups " of young artists in Poland. To-day, under the German New Order, all this ardent young creative life is hideously crushed, maltreated, killed.

Silencing of Polish Music

A like cruel fate has been accorded to the musicians of Poland. In no nation has music been more intimately a part of the life of the people. " *We do not admit the right of Poles to life in any form,*" was the official statement issued in the Nazi press in May, 1941. Therefore the music of Poland must be silenced. The incidents of war pressed heavily, of course, on buildings and personnel ; thus the Warsaw Opera House and the Warsaw Philharmonic building were both destroyed. But the action of the Nazi rulers has proved to be even more destructive than German bombs and incendiary fires. Polish musicians were expelled, by mass expulsions, from Western Poland. The equipment of the Poznan Opera House and that of the Conservatoires of Poznan, Katowice, Torun and Bydgoszcz, has been destroyed or confiscated. Any music by Polish composers found in the libraries was destroyed ; an act which the least educated savages might well hesitate to carry out, and one that should brand the Nazi mentality for all time. All Polish choral and musical societies have been disbanded, and their property confiscated. Even the famous choir of Poznan Cathedral was disbanded ; and its director, Dr. Gieburowski was first imprisoned and then placed under house arrest. From which it appears that it is forbidden by the Nazi regime for the Poles to use their natural gift of music even in the worship of God.

Public concerts have been rigorously banned. Music which is allowed in cafés and restaurants is closely censored ; all music by Polish composers, including Chopin, and Polish folk-music, being forbidden. Every musician playing in a restaurant or café must have his programme examined beforehand by officials specially delegated for this purpose. Musical education, whether State or private, has been forbidden ; unless, in the case of private tuition, a special permit has been granted by the Nazi authorities. Some musicians have formed them-

selves into small musical companies, and have earned a living by playing in streets, squares and courtyards, after permission has been given and a programme submitted. But even this means of earning a living was prohibited in Central Poland by a regulation which came into force on April 15, 1941, forbidding all playing, singing, and declamation in public places, streets, squares and the yards of houses. This prohibition could only be lifted by special application to the local authority ; and eliminated what was one of the most characteristic sights of Warsaw early in 1941, when street choirs and orchestras, many of them composed of well-known artists, had become prevalent in the capital. Finally, all the more valuable gramophone records of Polish music, ranging from folk songs to the works of Chopin, have been broken up by the Germans in the shops where they were found, the fragments being sent to Germany as " scrap." The Nazi regime is aiming at creating conditions that tend to the destruction of existing musical talent and of musical development.

The circular of June 3, 1940, already quoted, has a special paragraph dealing with the desired destruction of Polish music ; and defining the kind of music " allowed " to a subject race in the Nazi New Order. " The Poles," declares a document surely unique among civilised peoples, " are to be allowed such music as serves for amusement, all concerts which by means of their uplifting programmes would promote culture in Polish audiences are forbidden. In regard to Polish music all classical works, marches, folk songs, and national songs are forbidden." All the works of Chopin and other Polish composers are included under the heading of " classical works." The finely designed framework of Polish musical activity that has been so zealously built up in Poland during the past twenty years of her freedom, all the musical achievement in composition, production and publication, in the teaching of music, in the creation of symphony orchestras and of groups for chamber music, in the spread of musical culture among the masses—all this constructive work in the domain of music has been wiped out. That is one of the unique crimes of the twentieth century German aggressor.

Annihilation of Polish Drama

The German policy of annihilation has not spared the Polish theatres. The inevitable destruction of war, such as that experienced by the theatres of Warsaw and the library of the State Institute of Dramatic Art has been reinforced by systematic suppression. All the theatres in Central Poland which survived the invasion were confiscated, together with their property ; both theatres and property were handed over to German theatrical companies. All Polish performances are forbidden. From October, 1939, to June, 1940, there were no Polish theatrical performances in Central Poland ; German performances were, of course, given in the Polish theatres. Russian and Ukranian theatres have had no difficulty in obtaining permission for performances.

The notorious circular of June 3, 1940, has a particularly significant clause in regard to the Polish theatres. All operas and all performances of serious plays were forbidden. Operetta and revue were permitted ; and emphasis was laid on the prohibition of any discrimination against " frivolous and salacious " matter. It will be remembered that the German aim of degrading the Polish nation has included the deliberate encouragement of pornographic literature.* All theatrical representations dealing with Polish life, thought and, of course, national sentiments are banned by this circular. The intention of the Nazi authorities is that theatrical life shall die out completely in Poland, notwithstanding certain concessions for revue, farce and comedy, and for salacious matter in the General Gouvernement.

The German onslaught on drama in Poland has included not only the prohibition of the performance of any Polish drama, but also of any of the classics of the European stage. The ban extends to all the plays of Shakespeare. The attack, moreover, has included retrospective sentences. One of Poland's most distinguished actors, Jozef Wegrzyn was imprisoned by the Nazi terrorists. The crime of M. Wegrzyn was playing the part of Battler in Mr. Bernard Shaw's play *Geneva*, in the summer of 1939.† The Polish novelist, essayist, dramatic critic and poet

* *Supra*, p. 27.

† *Times*, 15.10.40.

M. Tadeusz Boy-Zelenski, who was arrested by the Germans when they entered Lwow on July 4, 1941, died in the notorious concentration camp at Dachau in the spring of the present year (1942). M. Tadeusz Boy-Zelenski was a member of the Polish Academy of Literature and of the Polish P.E.N. Club. But no literary distinctions saved him from a long agony in the horrible conditions of Dachau.

All Polish actors have been ordered to carry special identity cards authorising them to carry on their profession. Not content with this indignity the Nazi authorities promulgated, in the outrageous circular of June 3, 1940, rules devised for the further humiliation of Polish actors. Poles are not allowed to mingle with German actors as it "would not accord with German dignity for Poles to remain in German company after they have finished their acts;" if Polish and German performances have to take place in one hall or theatre then a considerable period should intervene; and it is recommended that Polish performances should take place in the afternoon, and German performances in the evening. It is easily understandable that the dignity of the invading German aggressors would suffer very considerably if they were brought into contact close enough to invite comparison with members of the Polish nation.

Destruction of Polish Public Monuments

The German invaders have declared a ruthless war upon Polish music, painting, drama, and also upon that section of Polish sculpture which has enshrined the great figures and the great moments of Polish history and Polish culture. These monuments were, of course, inconveniently obvious proofs that the Nazi declarations denying any history and any culture to Poland were simply clumsy falsehoods. The Nazi authorities did not embark on the task of removing every trace of a thousand years of Polish history in the city of Cracow. They did remove every trace of the noble equestrian statue of Ladislaus II, erected in Cracow to commemorate the great Polish victory of Grunwald in 1410. They did not level to the ground every opera house and concert hall in Poland; but they did wreak their enmity against Polish music by

utterly destroying the statue of Chopin, soon after their occupation of Warsaw. The destruction of the monuments erected in the Polish cities turns a searchlight on the German mind ; a mind which conceives it possible to expunge historic and cultural truth with dynamite.

This destruction of the historic monuments of Poland was carried out by the Nazi authorities *after* the occupation of the country was effected. It is in no way the result of war damage during the brief period of the invasion. Monuments have been systematically destroyed in all the chief cities of Poland. In Lodz, the Polish Manchester, all national monuments were destroyed by the first week in December, 1939, that is within three months of the German invasion of Poland. In Gniezno, the ancient capital of the Polish kings, and the seat of an archbishopric founded in the tenth century, the statue of King Boleslas I, erected in the front of the cathedral, was destroyed. It was in the reign of this monarch, in the close of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh century, that all Slavonic territory west of the river Oder was freed from German domination, and that the Polish power reached as far as Kiev. When Boleslas entertained Otho III of Germany the service at the table of the Polish king was of gold and silver plate. Great progress was made throughout Poland under the rule of Boleslas I, monasteries and schools being established, new cities built, and trade, notably with Greek merchants, increased. Only Nazi mentality could imagine that the national consciousness of this great period of Polish history could be destroyed by fuse and pick-axe.

Of equal historic interest was the great equestrian statue of King Ladislaus II, erected as a munificent gift from M. Paderewski to the city of Cracow, in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the victory of the Polish armies, allied with the Lithuanians and Ruthenians and with volunteer forces from Bohemia and Moravia over the Teutonic Knights. This victory on the battlefield of Grunwald, in 1410, was a victory of the allied Slavonic forces of defence, against the Teutonic forces of aggression. The standards carried by the allies of Poland on that historic field included three standards from Smolensk. Was it a subconscious sense of impending disaster which led the Teutonic barbarians of 1939 to

destroy, while the opportunity remained with them, a monument commemorating the victory of the Poles, in alliance with other Slavs, and with Czechs, Moravians, Ruthenians and Lithuanians, over the Teutonic aggressors in the fifteenth century?

Statues of Kosciuszko have been repeatedly destroyed. The memory of that great Polish fighter for freedom, both in Europe and in America, is secure in the keeping of all lovers of freedom both in the Old World and in the New; and it does not seem to have occurred to the German rulers of Poland that the destruction of statues of Kosciuszko would only brand them afresh, in the eyes of all civilised nations, with the stamp of unmitigated barbarism. America especially will not forget that Kosciuszko rose to the rank of general in the national army of the American War of Independence, and was the founder of the Military Academy of West Point. The day chosen for the destruction of the monument to Kosciuszko, in Lodz, was the Polish festival "Independence Day," the day of national commemoration of the birth of restored Polish independence on November 11, 1918. The method of the destruction was entirely Nazi. Two days before "Independence Day" all Poles and Jews who happened to be in the streets of Lodz were assembled round the statue, and were ordered to dig trenches under the base of the monument with pick-axes and spades. The monument was then "executed" with gunfire and blown up with dynamite; this was done at night and in the glare of searchlights. On Independence Day itself members of the Nazi Secret Police, the Gestapo, and military detachments were paraded before the heaps of debris; and groups of Germans had their photographs taken standing on the ruins. This was certainly appropriate, for ruins and debris will be the memorial of the Nazi regime throughout Europe.

The monument to President Wilson, by the American sculptor Gustav Borglum, erected in the ancient Polish capital Poznan, was destroyed; and also the monument to Poland's greatest poet, Adam Mickiewicz, together with all other monuments in the city. Orders were issued that all the public monuments in Warsaw should be removed, with the single exception of that to Copernicus.

IN 1410 King Jagiello won, at Grunwald, a decisive victory over the Germans, which checked German expansion for three centuries. On the 500th anniversary of the battle, in 1910, Paderewski presented to the Polish nation a Jagiello monument, which he erected in Cracow at his own cost. The Germans destroyed it immediately after occupying Poland.

CHOPIN'S monument in Warsaw, removed by the Germans. The Germans prohibited the playing of Chopin's music.

According to Nazi genealogies Copernicus was a German. During the first six months of German rule in Poland all the Polish national monuments in Western Poland were destroyed ; and after a year of German rule it was reported that the systematic destruction of all historic monuments was being carried out in Central Poland.

Eighteen months ago Dr. Goebbels sent instructions to German writers " not to write anything about Poland." Well may the Nazi rulers dread emergence of the truth concerning the savagery of an attack, which has not spared even the music, the painting, the drama, or the sculpture of their victim. A regime that makes war upon the fine arts of a defeated nation merits the contempt no less than the loathing of all civilised peoples. To-day Poland is ringed round with an iron wall of silence, imposed upon her by conquerors who intend to murder her, soul and mind and body. These pages are concerned with making known the attempted murder of the mind of the Polish people. When the free nations of the world realise all that lies behind the silence of Poland the day of her liberation will not be far off.

CHAPTER V

DESTRUCTION OF POLISH HISTORICAL RECORDS AND BUILDINGS, STATE ARCHIVES AND RELICS

" *By the strength of justice we shall endure and conquer.*"
Polish Underground Press.

EVEN a brief summary of the merciless war waged by the German power on Polish culture, a culture built up through eleven hundred years of national development, would be incomplete if no mention were made of the deliberate destruction of Polish archives, museums and historic buildings. This destruction is the more tragic when we realise that it was only within the last twenty years of Polish freedom that the reconstituted State had been able to recover some at least of the national treasure carried off by Russian spoliation. For more than six years after the Peace Treaty of Riga, concluded in 1921, Polish and Russian experts were at work defining Polish claims. The result was the return to Poland of many of the possessions of which she had been wantonly robbed since the first

partition in 1772. Archives which were recovered included charters and other historic documents providing students not only of Polish but also of European history with invaluable material. Over 1,000 manuscripts were returned from the Russian loot of the famous Zaluski Library, and were placed in the newly-created National Library of Poland, in Warsaw. The numismatic collection, numbering 12,000 coins taken from Warsaw University was also recovered; together with such historic relics as the coronation sword of the kings of Poland, and trophies brought back by King John Sobieski after that great soldier had delivered Europe from the Moslem invasion of 1683. Portions of the art collections taken away from the palaces of the art-loving Polish kings, and from the houses of Polish nobles, were also reclaimed. All this national wealth of archives, historic relics, paintings, books, engravings, sixteenth century tapestries and eighteenth century furniture from the royal palace of Warsaw was recovered only to fall into the rapacious and destructive hands of the German invader.

Polish scientific societies have devoted much energy to Polish historical research. These societies included the Warsaw Historical Society, the Cracow Society, the Lwow Historical Society, and the Cracow Academy which has published hundreds of volumes including important documents relating to Polish history, law and archæology. A branch of this academy was founded in Paris; and scholars of the Cracow Academy have been sent for some years to Rome, to Sweden and to Hungary in order to carry out researches relative to the history of Poland. No less active was the "Society of Friends of Learning" in Poznan, founded in 1857, which possessed a library of 140,000 volumes and 800 MSS. This society issued historical, legal, economic and other publications; promoted lectures; and undertook the care of ancient Polish monuments.

The State archives of Poland were distributed into sixteen collections, placed in Moscow, Cracow, Poznan and other cities; the archives of a single collection in Warsaw numbered nearly 40,000 sets of documents and books, including much material from the so-called Congress Kingdom from 1801 onwards. Archives of great

value relating to the military history of Poland were kept in the Central Military Library of Warsaw ; and the Zamoyski and other libraries, also in Warsaw, contained fine collections of historical material. When the Nazi invaders undertook the task of destroying the Polish nation they found themselves committed to the destruction of national records, national relics, and national buildings testifying to the existence of the Polish State for over a thousand years.

Confiscation and Destruction of Polish Archives

The destruction was rapid and ruthless. After the first year of the German occupation of Poland all Polish historic manuscripts had either been removed to Germany or been destroyed. All the Polish State archives in Western Poland have been confiscated. In Central Poland the entire library of the Diet and the Senate, as we have seen, was transported to Germany. A special commission seized illuminated and other manuscripts, including priceless manuscript records. The State Archæological Museum in Warsaw had all its more valuable contents confiscated, together with the library, and all the equipment of the museum. Manuscripts of the Krasinski Collection in Warsaw were taken, as were the ancient manuscripts of the Zamoyski Collection, the oldest of which dated from the eleventh century. All the Polish historical relics from the years 1500 to 1900 in the War Museum of Warsaw were confiscated, together with a ninth century tomb of great archæological value. A grievous loss to the history of Polish culture is the confiscation of the inventory carried out under the Ministry of Education, of all monuments and objects of historic interest in Poland. This included over 20,000 photographic plates and thousands of photographs and prints, the result of the work, during twenty years, of Polish architects, historians and collectors.

Destruction of Polish Historic Buildings

The fate of the historic buildings of Poland can best be realised by the deliberate destruction of the beautiful sixteenth century castle of the Polish kings, and later the residence of the President of the Polish Republic, in Warsaw. The damage done to the castle, during the bomb-

ing and artillery bombardment of Warsaw, in September, 1939, could have been easily repaired. The Nazi authorites not only did nothing themselves to save the building, but emphatically refused permission to a committee of the citizens of Warsaw to carry out necessary repairs. It is characteristic of the indomitable spirit of the Polish people that within a few weeks of the terrible siege of Warsaw, in the course of which the death-roll was estimated at 60,000, preliminary work was begun on the partially ruined castle. This work was continued with the help of Polish architects, art historians and experts in restoration till October 18, 1939. On this date the notorious German Governor of Central Poland, the fraudulent lawyer Dr. Frank, arrived at the castle with his suite, and gave his orders on the spot. From that day the systematic wrecking of the equipment of the collection within the castle began. At the same time the Nazi officials gave orders that all restoration and building work should cease. Holes were bored for dynamite and the date for blowing up the castle was fixed for the end of the winter frosts. Meanwhile the dismantling of the interior was carried out in the most barbarous way. Works of art were destroyed, being treated as scrap metal. Marble fireplaces and wallfacings were torn out ; marble sculptures were broken ; and fine inlaid floors were destroyed with pick-axes. Magnificent eighteenth century wood panelling was tossed into lorries, broken and ruined. Everything of the least value was removed. Late in December the beautiful eighteenth century painted ceiling of Bacciarelli, in the former audience chamber, was thrown down and broken into small pieces. By a striking coincidence the subject of Bacciarelli's painting was The Triumph of Art and Learning. The broken fragments symbolised only too poignantly this Nazi triumph over art and learning. Paintings, bronzes, sculptures, Gobelin tapestries, Renaissance majolica, magnificent eighteenth century crystal chandeliers and beautiful period furniture were all removed, in part for the furnishing of the house occupied by Dr. Frank, in part for the furnishing of other Nazi offices and houses. The State art collections housed in the library wing of the castle were pillaged, and portions were destroyed on the spot. The efforts made by Polish experts to erect temporary

repairs in October, 1939, were pulled down at the end of February, 1940. Only a few crumbling walls remained of one of the most beautiful Renaissance buildings in Poland. The Nazi officials have expressly declared, more than once, that the destruction of the castle was carried out because the building was the symbol of the Polish State and Nation.

Not content with the savage destruction of the royal castle of Warsaw, the German vandals attacked with equal brutality the famous Belvedere Palace, built in the sixteenth and " restored " in the eighteenth century.

The palace was occupied by Marshal Pilsudski, in 1920, as Chief of State ; and here, in 1935, this great Polish patriot and soldier died. The Nazi officials gave orders for the spoliation of the interior of the building ; the chapel was filled with megaphones ; the rooms were stripped of all their furniture ; all relics of historical importance were taken away ; even the bed on which the Marshal died was not spared. The Nazi regime in its madness is trying to wipe out every vestige of Polish history from the tenth century to the present day.

Contents of Polish Museums Confiscated

The German rulers have made wholesale confiscations of the contents of the Polish museums. In the provinces of Western Poland all museums have been confiscated, whether public or private ; and over thirty public museums were involved in this ruin. In Central Poland the contents of museums have been deliberately destroyed ; and Nazi officials have been allowed to remove any objects to which they took a fancy. The fate of the Museum of Poznan, the National Museum of Western Poland, is typical of German rule. Everything Polish was removed from this museum ; a new German curator was appointed ; new German exhibits were put in ; the name of the museum was notified to be the " Kaiser Friedrich Museum; and only Germans were to be admitted. Thus did the Nazi historians endeavour to demonstrate " the ancient Germanic character of the land." It should be added that ninety-seven per cent. of the population of Poznan is Polish. In order to furnish a palace for the Governor-General of Central Poland, the *ci-devant* lawyer Dr. Frank,

a personal present was made to him by Herr Hitler of the treasures seized from the Baryczka collection in the National Museum of Cracow ; the Museum building has been converted into a Casino. In some cases selections from the property of the Polish museums were assigned to German collections. Many museum pieces have been sent, by order, to offices, clubs, army messes, and private houses of officials ; thus, the wife of the Governor of Cracow, Frau Waechter, chose treasures from the National Museum in Cracow. Sections of the National Museum in Warsaw have been entirely removed. The whole of the State numismatic collection was confiscated. The incredible fact must be placed on record that Poles have been forbidden to enter many of their own museums. The complete lack of any historic sense in the Nazi mind is demonstrated by the confiscation of the Spear of St. Maurice from the treasury of the Wawel Cathedral in Cracow, for this relic was presented to the Polish King Boleslas the Valiant, in 1025, by a German monarch, Otto III. Thus a princely German gift to Poland in the eleventh century becomes German loot in the twentieth century.

Destruction in Historic Polish Towns

Finally, the German war on Polish culture does not spare the characteristic buildings of Polish cities. Plans have been announced for the demolition of mediæval houses ; many historical buildings in Warsaw that were injured during the siege could have been repaired but were demolished in order to effect a so-called " clearance " ; buildings of great historic interest have been destroyed in Lowicz ; everything possible was done to deprive the town of Bydgoszcz of its Polish features. The ancient Polish capital, Poznan, where the earliest Polish kings are buried, is suffering from German building. Ciechanow is to be transformed into a " model German town." A plan has even been worked out for the " reconstruction " of Cracow, deservedly known as one of the most perfectly preserved mediæval cities in Europe ; official buildings have been designed by a German bureau that would certainly change the character of the ancient Polish capital. " Rebuilding " has even taken place in the Wawel hill of Cracow, with its castle and cathedral, the

home and the burial place of Polish kings and heroes ; here no Pole is allowed to see what is being done.

The German occupation of Poland is a sordid and brutal record of destruction. Human life has been destroyed in mass executions unparalleled in the history of civilised peoples and by the no less unparalleled tortures of the concentration camps ; and these executions and tortures have been deliberately used to exterminate the educated classes in Poland. It is well to recall again the statement made with all the considered authority of Mr. Churchill, that within five months of German subjugation of Poland " upwards of fifteen thousand intellectual leaders have been shot."* Every endeavour has been made to destroy the language, the education, the literature, the science, the art, and even the visible proofs of the long and splendid history of the Polish nation. Archives have been confiscated, the homes of kings and leaders have been pillaged and destroyed, everything most precious as the heritage of a proud and sensitive people has been confiscated, destroyed, desecrated.

The German people to-day are said to be effectively insulated from world public opinion. But every day, every week, every month that public opinion is forming, as the facts of the destruction of Poland break through the walls of silence which her enemies have sought to build around her. In due time the Nazi rulers of Poland and the German nation, by whom these rulers have been supported, will stand for trial, arraigned at the bar of the conscience of the world.

Chapter VI

But Poland Lives

" During the last two years the heroic and determined manner in which the Polish people have struggled and sacrificed in the face of tremendous hardships and deprivation has been an inspiration not only to the people of the United States but to liberty loving people everywhere." President Roosevelt on July 5, 1941.

In Poland, to-day, can be seen more perfectly than in any other European country, the range and the force of Nazi

* Speech by the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, January 27, 1940.

aggression. Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland and France are enduring a brutal oppression. Poland is enduring a brutal attempt at destruction. Every week, as Mr. Churchill pointed out in his broadcast to the Polish nation, on Poland's National Day, May 3, 1941, the firing parties of Hitler " are busy in a dozen lands. Monday he shoots Dutchmen, Tuesday Norwegians, Wednesday, French or Belgians stand against the wall ; while Thursday it is Czechs who must suffer, and now there are Serbs and Greeks to fill his repulsive bill of execution. But always, all the days, there are the Poles."*

Always, all the days, there are the Poles ; and the rate at which the slaughter of the Polish nation has been carried on may be gauged from the number of men and women and of Polish youths who have been shot or hanged in Poland since the German occupation of the country. In September, 1942, this figure had reached 200,000. Prominent in the death lists are cultured leaders and workers. Professors, men of letters, doctors, scholars, engineers, artists, lawyers, have been murdered, or have suffered a slower death by hardship and torture in Nazi concentration camps. In Western Poland the intellectual classes have been completely wiped out. Those who have not been killed or imprisoned have been stripped of everything they possessed and then deported, in cattle trucks, into Central Poland. Here, without any means of existence, they have been scattered, mainly among small towns and villages. The situation in Central Poland is similar. The Nazi regime in Poland aims at the murder of the mind of the nation ; and this aim has been repeatedly proclaimed by the representative of Hitler in Central Poland, Governor-General Frank. " The Polish lands," he declares, " are to be changed into an intellectual desert—(*eine intellectuelle Wüste*)." Governor-General Frank should have added an intellectual desert covered with the graves of the victims of a considered and deliberate policy.

These pages have given documented proofs of this new thing in world history, this policy of destroying the mind of a nation. It is a policy that is, of course, supplemented by the systematic introduction of members of the aggressor

* Broadcast to the Polish Nation, by the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, May 3, 1941.

race who are given the houses, the schools, the universities, the scientific and technical institutes needed in the effort to organise Poland as a section of German Reich. Only those Poles are suffered to remain who carry on industrial and agricultural labour. Is this policy, it will be asked, merely a display of rancorous hate against a nation that the German conquerors know only too well may have been vanquished but has never surrendered? Such hate is doubtless an element in the ruthless policy of extermination in Poland. But the Nazi policy of this extermination is far more deeply rooted. Not only the occupation but the total elimination of Poland is essential to the policy of the *Drang nach Osten*—of expansion towards the East—which is the dream not only of Hitler but of 95 per cent. of the German Reich.

"The future goal of our foreign policy," wrote Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, "ought to be an Eastern policy which will have in view the acquisition of such territory as is necessary for our German people."*

It has been suggested that the ultimate objective of the Nazi regime for Russia is the establishment of a Russian government, or governments, which will carry out Hitler's orders as faithfully as do the men of Vichy; and that this fundamental policy is at the back of the facade of the Nazi anti-Bolshevik "crusade." Be this as it may the entire *Drang nach Osten* policy rests on the preliminary destruction of the barrier to the eastern expansion of Germany, the people of Poland. Poland has been dismembered, attacked, trampled on for a hundred and fifty years; but the spirit and unity of the Polish nation has never been broken. It is to achieve what all other enemies of Poland have failed to achieve that now the Nazi regime has embarked, as we have seen, on the deliberate attempt to murder the soul and mind of the nation.

Have they succeeded? Here is the answer by a member of the Polish Government, M. Stanislaw Stronski: "The biggest Polish contribution towards the war however is being made by the Polish nation at home, by the millions of Polish men and women who, in spite of all their sufferings remain faithful to the Polish soil and to their Polish traditions. They have made no attempt to arrive at an

* *Mein Kampf*. English edition, p. 542.

understanding with the invader. Nowhere has the national front been broken." It is difficult for us, in the relative peace and comfort of England, to realise the superb and tenacious heroism that those words represent. It is a heroism acclaimed by Cardinal Hinsley in the moving words of a broadcast to the Polish nation by His Eminence on Easter Sunday, 1940 : " You, through all history will have the glory of a brave resistance against overwhelming odds, and of heroic suffering heroically borne. The like brutality and the like cruelty of exterminating hate the world has never seen before. . . . Poland will rise again : ' Fear not those who are not able to kill the soul.' "

Here are some examples of the resistance against overwhelming odds now being carried out day by day by the steadfast men, women and children of Poland ; and much cannot, of course, be told until the sure and certain day of liberation comes. It is a united nation that is sustaining this invincible resistance. Political and social differences have been merged in the one immediate aim, the aim of the preservation of Poland. A remarkable tribute to this magnificent resistance of a united Poland was made at a Press Conference held in Berlin in February of 1942, under Herr Dietrich, the Press Chief of the Reich Government. " From the very beginning," declared the Conference, " Poland has offered resistance to the victorious German nation ; the entire Polish nation are one in their fight against Germany ; the Polish army continues to fight us in all the various theatres of war ; the Polish air force is bombing Germany ; Polish propaganda obstructs German policy abroad ; while in Poland itself the population is doing all in its power to sabotage German efforts."

The whole country is covered with secret newspapers. To-day " there is in Poland something like an Association of Underground Journalists. It includes those who write, those who print, those who have the reckless courage to distribute the papers, and those who buy and read every number of the secret press . . . the underground press is the expression of Poland's thoughts."* From the first day of their occupation the German rulers decided to exterminate thought in Poland. They have not succeeded, and this is their first great defeat. The victory has been

* *Free Europe*, " Conspiracy of a Nation," Z. Nowakowski, 13.2.42.

won by taking tremendous risks : " those who distribute the secret papers are indeed out on patrol in enemy territory ; the printers dig their graves with every letter they print. For the discovery of a clandestine printing press involves the death of dozens of people. Nevertheless the papers appear at the same time every day." The news is taken principally from radio ; and listening-in in Poland is a crime that carries a death sentence. " One person writes the leader, another reports the events of the day, a third edits the war communiqués, others write party, professional and economic news. Someone prints the papers. Someone keeps guard. The printing presses must be moved from one place to another. Others seize the papers damp from the press and run to distribute them."* Often the distributors are small boys barefoot, ragged and hungry, in Warsaw, Cracow, and other towns. Germans shoot children ; the youngest of the boy distributors of the secret press to fall " on the field of honour " was a little lad of Poznan, ten years old. The buyers do not wait for change. The small news boys, ragged and hungry, do not keep the change ; they give it to the funds of the secret press. This press is well illustrated with fearless satiric drawings ; and from photographs of the Polish armies and fighter squadrons training and fighting in foreign lands, of a parade of Polish troops for the British Prime Minister, of the decoration of Polish pilots. The Germans cannot imprison Polish thought.

The trumpet tones of the Polish secret press sound with no uncertain voice. Here are some examples :

" Anyone who regards himself as a Pole and wants to be able to carry his head high in the future Poland must to-day take direct part in the fight against the occupation. There is no place amongst us for any kind of compromise."

Again :

" Every difficulty put in the way of the occupants is equivalent to aid conferred on Poland and her allies . . . from German sources we can affirm that there is an increase in Polish resistance."

This resistance includes go-slow movements ; the complete refusal of villages to comply with the German

* *Ibid.*

regulations ; an increase in the secret slaughter of cattle ; and great difficulties in extracting food and other quotas. Another secret paper describes the numbers eluding German deportations, and the frequent return of deported youths to their home districts, confirming the will to struggle of the nation. Here is yet another extract from the secret press :

" Recently a party of deportees from Pomerania was despatched from Torun. Just as the train started, from all the trucks came singing in chorus ' Poland hath not yet perished.' "

The Germans, for all their anger, were helpless in the face of the unity of the entire transport. And here are instructions in the necessary wisdom of the active combatant :

" Every reader . . . ceases to be a private person, he is in the national service . . . he should cautiously and prudently put this journal in circulation . . . and correct false enemy propaganda . . . all talkativeness in regard to organisational questions is stupid and criminal."

The work of the Polish secret press alone justifies the comment made in America last May (1941) :

" The Polish people universally have confidence in the leaders of underground Poland. I doubt if history has ever known a similar case of an oppressed nation the masses of which were so disciplined, so solid and so devoted to their leaders working underground and always present though never seen."*

Already the Hitler Reich is feeling the menace of the organised resistance of millions of Poles.

It is a negative as well as a positive resistance. This is the tribute of an " underground " press writer to the invincible refusal of Polish men and women to write for those Nazi publications which the German rulers are endeavouring to circulate :

" To-day we wish to pay tribute to Polish literature and its workers. Although need and unemployment have reigned universally in the literary world, although reptile weeklies and monthlies entice and tempt them, although they are threatened with registration for forced labour, not one of the Polish writers, whether man or woman, has broken his honourable silence."†

* *Nowiny Polskie,* Milwaukee, 6.5.41. † *The German New Order in Poland,* p. 568.

And even to-day this heroic silence finds outlet in the secret printing of pamphlets and of poems.

"Polish writers, scientists and artists, at home and abroad, are carrying on their task of preserving the spirit of Poland."*

The Polish underground press is one of the most striking manifestations of the vitality and resolution of the Poles, and of the Polish national unity. The men and women, boys and girls who produce and distribute this press do so under the continual menace of imprisonment, torture, and death. Two girls of 14 and 16 were caught distributing papers ; they were imprisoned for three weeks, and then shot. Their mutilated bodies were returned to their parents, showing proofs of the monstrous crimes that had been committed against them. But they had betrayed no secrets, and the paper which they were distributing continues to appear. This is the spirit which the brute force of Germany can neither conquer nor exterminate.

Positive resistance is also being actively pursued in regard to the attempt to enforce Nazi education on Polish children, in the elementary schools and training courses which are the only form of education allowed, as all Polish secondary schools and universities have been dissolved. A notice issued in August, 1941, announcing trade schools, promulgated the incredible threat "*Youths who do not fall in with this instruction will be taken to school with the aid of the police.*"† In September it was found necessary to postpone the last date for registration for school attendance "owing to the small number of children who have been registered up to date." Polish parents do not mean to allow young Poland to become a Hitler Youth.

Not only do the parents in Poland protect their children by every means in their power from the Nazi virus. Measures have also been taken to provide training in allied lands for the future intelligentsia of Poland. The establishment of a Polish faculty of medicine in Edinburgh, opened in March, 1941, is, in the words of the founders, "the first demonstration by the scientific world against Hitler's 'New Order.'" But this foundation is also a first essential step towards the restoration of Poland—

* *Free Europe*, "Polish Literature has never Capitulated," 14.11.41.

† *Polish Fortnightly Review*, 1.1.42.

the training of young Polish men and women for their future task. Early in the present year (1942) the Royal College of Surgeons admitted the Dean of the new faculty, Professor Antoni Jurasz, to the Honorary Fellowship of the College ; and the president of the College, Sir Alfred Webb-Johnson, welcomed this remarkable achievement of the creation of a Polish School of Medicine, set up at a moment that might seem, to a superficial observer, to be Poland's death agony. " Your own University of Poznan," Sir Alfred said, " has been the object of concentrated attacks aimed at its complete annihilation as a spiritual centre. These attacks will fail, for although Poland holds a premier place among the persecuted peoples of the world, her national culture has survived all attempts to destroy it. The greatness of a nation is the spirit of its people, and the Polish spirit is unquenchable."*

That unquenchable spirit is aflame, not only in the installation on allied soil of training centres for the youth of Poland, but also in the literature now being produced by Poles in exile. In England and in Scotland Polish books, novels and essays are being written and published. Polish music is being heard in the recitals of the famous Polish Army Choir, a choir formed and trained with the greatest effort by men who, as a member of the choir declared, had " lost everything, almost our hope," but not the indomitable will to win through. That will has produced one of the finest male voice choirs to be heard in England to-day. Drama, a vital element in Polish culture is represented by active groups in this country. Folk music, dances, even costume may be seen transplanted to a foreign land, but very much alive. " To you," said a Pole, " it may seem like a show ; to us it means something very deep ; it is our tradition." The cultural tradition, so vividly alive to-day, of the Polish nation reaches back to the tenth century ; it will not be destroyed by the *ersatz* Hitler " culture " hastily manufactured in two decades.

A striking instance of the indomitable Polish resilience comes from the 10,000 or so Polish women, children, and men unfit for military service, who have been quartered in the great camp on the outskirts of Teheran. These

* *Times*, 13.2.42.

refugees arrived from a long and exhausting journey through Russia, whither they had been deported in the days of the Soviet occupation of Eastern Poland. They arrived in Persia destitute of everything but the invincible Polish spirit. Within two months these Polish masses organised their new existence with remarkable success. With the aid of the British and Persian authorities, and of the American Red Cross, kitchens, bakeries, laundries, hospitals and schools were soon "going strong," staffed by Poles. A hundred women made the much-needed clothing. In the carpenter's shop furniture was manufactured. In the shoemakers' quarters boots were repaired, and dozens of boys were taught how to make shoes.

"To see these hives of men, women and children," wrote the special correspondent of the *Times* "at work, you feel that they are living the first lines of their national anthem: '*Poland is not lost while we still live*'" Nearly half of this great community are children; for "save the children" is the keynote of Polish policy; and many a Polish parent has stayed behind in Siberia, so that his or her child might go to Europe. The Polish influx, moreover, became a quickening influence in the Persian capital. Polish shops sprang up; Polish waitresses served in cafés and restaurants, where Polish artistic and musical performances became a regular feature. This was made possible by the presence of musicians and actors from the Warsaw theatres and cabarets who escaped to Lwow and were thence deported to Russia. These exiles "staged an entertainment which for charm and variety would do credit to any music-hall in London or Paris, and made one feel again the throb of Polish vitality."*

A year ago the German occupiers of Poland were made to feel the throb of Polish vitality even in Warsaw. For all Poles the 11th of November is not only the anniversary of the armistice of 1918; it is also the anniversary of the day on which the German troops were disarmed by the people of Warsaw; and it is a national holiday. The secret paper *Rzeczpospolita*, of November 13th, 1941, reported:—

"When in the early morning of November 11th, the people went out into the streets of Warsaw, an unusual sight met their eyes. On walls and fences; on house

* *Times*, 20.6.42.

walls and pavements, on tram standards, a proud inscription had been written in chalk, in paint, in tar. It read—

Poland lives. Poland will conquer.

The night before the national holiday, in the darkness of the blacked-out city, groups of bold Polish patriots, devoted to the Polish cause, had quietly done their work. Hundreds of willing hands had worked that night in order that next day all that Warsaw felt should be visible and clear to all. Similar activities were reported from all the other cities of Poland."

Early in the present year (1942) a message from President Roosevelt was broadcast to the Polish people. The President gave his assurance that he would remember the atrocities inflicted upon innocent men, women and children, and pledged the utmost resources of the United States "to destroy the invader, and to restore Poland." President Roosevelt noted with pleasure that "resistance to German propaganda remains high in Poland," and concluded his message with the words :

"Poland was the first country to resist, the U.S.A. the most recent. Side by side with Poland the U.S.A. will fight with the total resources that they are capable of mustering. The outcome of the struggle can be in no doubt."*

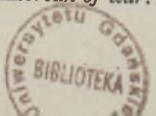
Recently the King, in a message to the Polish President, welcomes the coming dawn for Poland :—

"The ever-growing strength of the United Nations is a sure guarantee that the day of liberty will dawn for the oppressed people of Poland who continue to resist the enemy with such courage and devotion."†

There is no doubt that neither terror, nor the destruction of national possessions, nor the centralised control of all activities in German hands, nor hunger, nor the one harvest that is plentiful, the harvest of death, can destroy or even restrain the vital forces of the Polish nation. Among these forces Poland can count, as second only to that of her religion, the force of her indestructible culture.

* *Broadcast message to the Polish People, from President Roosevelt*, January 26, 1942, from American Radio stations.

† *Message by H.M. The King to President Raczkiewicz, on the third anniversary of the outbreak of war.* Times 7.9.42.


BIBLIOTEKA

BIBLIOTEKA